

WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY
THE Z. SMITH REYNOLDS LIBRARY



CALL NO.



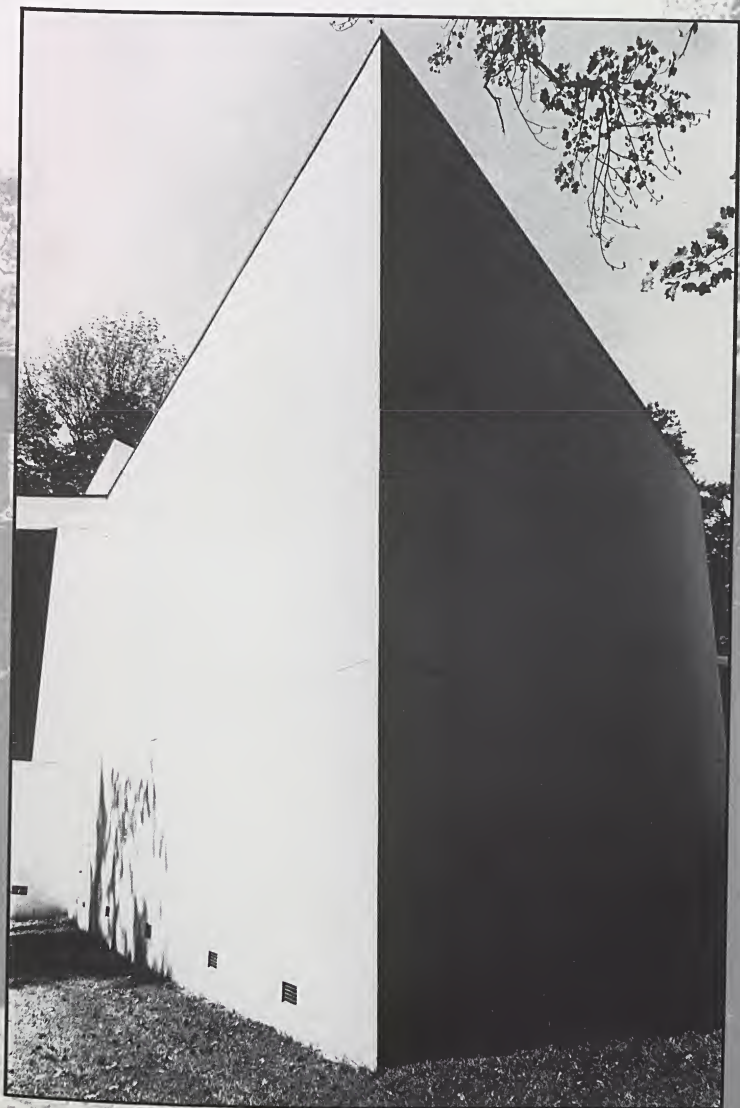
1979/80

NOT TO BE CIRCULATED



The Student

Fall 1979



LH
1
W4
S78
1979/80



The Student

WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY • WINSTON-SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA • FALL 1979



Stephen Tippet

EDITOR

Robin Elaine Byrd

CO-EDITOR

Paula Dale

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Evelyn Byrd Tribble

ASSISTANT EDITORS

Edward Allen

James Gurley

Esther Hill

ART EDITOR

Stephen Tippie

ASSISTANT POETRY EDITOR

Kenneth Prichard

STAFF

Janet Bynum

Erin E. Campbell

Eva Curley

Julie Doub

Autumn Duhe

Lisa Ferguson

Catherine Frier

Erle Hall

Elizabeth Hamrick

David Humpton

John Hunter

Annette Kavanough

Leslie Kell

Tom Lewis

Alfonso McMillian

John McNair

Briane Pittman

Mike Riley

Marty Rowden

Jenny Sharpe

Douglas Varley

ADVISORS

Lee Potter

Bynum Shaw

Cover and inside front cover by Stephen Tippie.

Inside back cover by Randy Stoltz.

Special thanks to Teresa Brown, College Union, Dillon Johnston, and Stuart Wright.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

©1979 by **The Student**. All rights reserved.

No part of this magazine may be reproduced in any form without permission.

Poetry

<i>Kenneth Prichard</i>	9	Orange Glitter
	34	Here
<i>Jay Meek</i>	17	Fiddleheads for Dinner
<i>Derek Mahon</i>	26	Ford Manor
<i>James Gurley</i>	27	Worsening Situation
<i>Tom Albritton</i>	27	A Run Along Miles
	34	Tall Ships
<i>Julia Myers</i>	34	Lot
<i>Duke Finley</i>	35	Vancouver
<i>Robin Byrd</i>	35	Thoidy-Thoid and Thoid

Short Stories

<i>G. Dale Neal</i>	18	Funeral in 3-D
<i>Stephen Amidon</i>	36	Jeu de Paume
<i>Pamela Schroeder</i>	44	A Long Road Home

Bookcase

<i>Julie Doub</i>	45	William Styron: <i>Sophie's Choice</i>
<i>Jenny Brantley</i>	45	James Baldwin: <i>Just Above My Head</i>
<i>Catherine Burroughs</i>	46	Nancy Cardow: <i>Lucky Eyes</i>
<i>John McNair</i>	47	Carl Sagan: <i>Broca's Brain</i>
<i>Alison Biggs</i>	48	Raymond Bridge: <i>Bike Touring</i>

The Student is published three times per academic year by the students of Wake Forest University with funds provided by the university. It is a non-profit organization existing by and for the Wake Forest community. Manuscripts and suggestions may be brought by our office room 224, Reynolda Hall, or mailed to Box 7247, Reynolda Station, Winston-Salem, N.C. 27106. Opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect those of the editors. **The Student** is printed by the Winston Printing Company.

Interviews



page 4

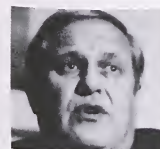
- 10 **A RENAISSANCE MAN TALKS** Reynolds Price is a writer of novels, short stories, articles, and poetry; a professor at Duke University; an artist by hobby; and a born and bred Southerner who says he will never leave North Carolina. He also has something to say about other things—publishing politics, regional literature, universal understanding. By Robin Byrd.

- 23 **AN IRISH SURVIVOR** Some Irish poets still struggle under the shadow of Yeats and the label of being an Irish poet. But Derek Mahon refuses to conform to the critics' conceptions. Calling himself a poet of the British Isles he has a wider perspective on the border problem and Ireland. By James Gurley.



page 10

- 28 **POLITICAL MACHINE RUNS AMUCK** Jack Anderson has brought upon himself the wrath of the establishment with his evangelical style of muckraking. Yet his prominence and his influence in determining American policy make him a cog in that same wheel of government. He expounded upon energy, investigative journalism, and governmental policies in September at a College Union lecture. By Mary Nash Kelly.



page 28

- 4 **A SOUTHERN HAVEN FOR THE ARTS** Stephen Tippie explores the growing celebrity of Winston-Salem as a cultural center of the South. He features SECCA and the North Carolina School of the Arts as two institutions that seek to develop new talent.

- 30 **FORUM ON ENERGY** Just who is to blame for the oil shortage? Two Wake professors, Charles M. Allen of the biology department and John C. Moorhouse of the economics department, offer their own interpretations of the situation and how it began.



page 36

- 42 **WAKE'S COMMITMENT TO THE ARTS** The art department is featured in this first installment of a three-part series on the Fine Arts Center. Later issues will deal with the theater and a proposed music wing.

Articles

WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY

The Arts Find A Southern Haven

Stephen Tippie

The artist, historically mistrusted and even despised while living but honored, if not acclaimed, when safely dead, must fling the novelty of his precious work in the face of a tradition-bound and blindfolded public — a public often insulted and occasionally disgusted by what it feels is a cold slap in the face to its cultural expectations. The southern United States has been historically regarded as the provincial backwater of East coast culture. The calculated disdain for Southern arts and Southern artists who still clung to the South geographically and stylistically probably sank to its lowest mark in the 1920's when the chronically satiric H. L. Mencken sardonically grumbled that the area south of Baltimore was nothing but a cultural "Sahara of the Bozart." Southerners were quick to defend the honor of their genteel cultural institutions but, with some exceptions, they were generally of questionable quality. The North, primarily New York, Philadelphia and Boston, was the center of American Culture, and North is where the talented artist went to be trained and discovered.

Since the end of World War II, the onset of generalized affluence and, thanks to the G. I. Bill, the creation of a more educated populace, the idea that an artist is required to make a pilgrimage to New York, often starving in Bohemian obscurity until a fortuitous discovery brings public acceptance, vast wealth and a show at the Met, has been shed in favor of regional artistic training, identifying, and exhibiting. Artists and critics are beginning to accept the notion that regional influences on the artist are important in the development of his thought and method. The regional influence has been a factor in the shift that contemporary art has taken from "schools" of composition toward more individual and highly personal imagery and symbol. The term for this shift, the "new regionalism," is regarded as a misnomer by artists, curators, and critics who have been aware of the regional movement for

years. The South, one of the regions suddenly discovered to have artists, has for years been supporting them with enthusiasm, knowledge, and some of the most successful philanthropic activity in the United States.

Since January of this year three national periodicals have published articles on the cultural vitality of one of the South's preeminent arts-oriented cities — Winston-Salem, North Carolina. The articles are so laudatory that if they had been written by native North Carolinians the authors would have been open to charges of unabashed boosterism and Chamber-of-Commerce hype. The *Wall Street Journal* and *U. S. News and World Report* go so far as to propose the arts program in Winston-Salem as a national model for effective strategy in urban revitalization. They cite particularly the novelty of using the arts as a cultural drawing card for the restoration of the inner city.

Bennett Schiff, a member of the *Smithsonian's* Board of Editors, says in an article in the *Smithsonian* (January, 1979) that the cultural atmosphere in Winston-Salem is reminiscent of "Siena in, say the 14th century. We are not speaking of architecture or of genius, but of the spirit of a place with regard to the arts and to artists and the welcome place of the arts within the daily lives of citizens." It is the germ of the idea expressed by Mr. Schiff, that the citizens of Winston-Salem are sensitive to both the arts and the needs of the artist that is the key to the overwhelming and fascinating success of the arts in this small, Southern town.

It is a paradox of human nature that the artist must actively cultivate a state that most of us actively avoid — the state of being alone. The artist's mind is his laboratory, and he works in accordance to a rigorous code; a code that supersedes any consideration that interferes with his responsibility to reveal what he considers the truth, no matter how objectionable that truth is to others. He is involved in delicate, exacting

and very strenuous work. It must appear spontaneous but not frivolous, carefully thought out but not artificially constructed.

"This work is often achieved at great cost to the artist, something akin to wire walking over a psychic abyss. Perhaps this is what A. R. Ammons, a poet with southern roots, meant when he wrote the lines, "thin the wire/I limp in space, melt it/With quick heat, let me walk/or fall alone." The artist is able to see both the best and the worst in life and through his work he expresses his view of it to us. We respect him for this but we also fear him for it. James Baldwin calls the artist "an incorrigible disturber of the peace," because he challenges us at every step, mystifies us with his craft, and angers or thrills us with his insight. But perhaps his most important role is as a disturber of the traditions that paralyze us.

Once a tradition has evolved it becomes a hidebound obstacle to the unrelenting natural order of change. People begin to assume that their particular traditions have existed since before the beginning of time and are unwilling or unable to admit that they might be capable of being altered. It is from tradition that they assume their identities. This is the major obstacle facing the artist — he must know that stasis is unnatural and that no tradition of thought or style can be taken for granted.

The true artist will naturally continue to create in the face of obstinate tradition, but imagine the possibilities open to those artists who live and work in a community that encourages challenge, a community that welcomes iconoclast as well as traditionalist. The shock to most is that such a community can exist outside the large population centers of the Northeast and West Coast. Probably even more surprising is its exact location — in the heart of the traditionally conservative, church-studded, bible belt Piedmont section of North Carolina.

Winston-Salem's support of the arts has been noticed by important people in national arts organizations as well as the popular publications already mentioned. Joan Mondale, the wife of the Vice-President and a tireless worker for contemporary arts and crafts, has visited Winston-Salem twice for the purpose of calling attention to its prominence in cultural organization and presentation. The most distinguished gathering was the group at an opening last year of a showing of the work of recipients of the Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art's annual artist's grants, grants awarded by a panel of judges composed of nationally prominent museum curators, critics, and museum board members. Present at this particular reception were: Mary Anne Tighe, deputy director of the National Endowment for the Arts; Howard Klein, director of Arts Programming for the Rockefeller Foundation; Mrs. P. R. Norman, member of the International Council of the Museum of Modern Art; Milton Esterow, editor and publisher of *Art News*; art patron and documentary filmmaker, François de Menil; Peter N. Kyros, Jr., deputy chairman

of the Federal Council on the Arts and Humanities; Stephen Prokopoff, director of Boston's Institute of Contemporary Art; New York art dealers Bella Fishko and Andre Emmerich; and Joshua Taylor, director of the Smithsonian's National Collection of Fine Arts. The appearance of these influential members of the national art community was not gratuitous. It was a tribute to Winston-Salem as a leading, if not the leading, regional center for the training, recognition, and presentation of talented artists in the United States.

What the artist finds in Winston-Salem, besides a receptive community, are important institutions not solely devoted to acquiring and presenting only established artists. These institutions provide an arena where an unknown may gain public exposure and support. The artist's work is presented in a professional manner and, if he is given an exhibit in one of Winston-Salem's galleries or a public performance on one of its stages, he can be assured that every reasonable effort will be made to bring his work to those who might be able to assist him, both locally and nationally.

These institutions do not usually meet the traditional criteria for institutional status, and they are happy to keep it that way, being more interested in presenting an opening for new ideas in the arts than functioning as receptacles for the old. Naturally both the old and the new have their places in the community, but in Winston-Salem the non-acquisitive gallery is given equal status with the collecting museum, the student production with the professional production. Two local institutions have assumed the task of presenting local talent; one identifies and exhibits artists; the other discovers, refines and presents performers.

The Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art, or SECCA (pronounced SEE-ka) as it is locally known, is an institution that shies away from the traditional role of an arts institution. Ted Potter, director of SECCA, is quick to point out that his charge is not a museum but a gallery with no permanent collection. "Institutions don't make artists," says Potter; the function of an arts center is to "identify, present, and support" artists of creative promise or achievement.

Physically SECCA is impressive. Behind the ivied stone facade of an English manor-style mansion, augmented by the recent addition of a modern two-story wing consisting of joined triangles of concrete and glass (a melding that, oddly enough, works very well), are eight distinct exhibition areas, all devoted to regional contemporary art. (The region covered by SECCA is the 11-state area encompassing North Carolina, South Carolina, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia.)

Equally impressive is the scope of the exhibits. Ted Potter erased the artificial line between the fine arts and the fine crafts when he took over as SECCA's director in 1967. At one time, and in one building you are likely to find exhibits as varied as papermaking, pottery, jewelry,

traditional photography, experimental photography, earth works, water works and conceptual art, in addition to the traditional paintings, prints, and sculptures — a concatenation of objects and styles rarely encountered under one roof.

Artists applying to SECCA will not find themselves facing a labyrinth of curators, sub-curators and minor potentates; nor will they find that final acceptance is tailored to the taste of one dictatorial director. All submissions are given equal consideration and are usually judged by more than one curator.

There are four ways that an artist approaches SECCA, or SECCA approaches the artist, for an exhibit: the artist submits a resume with at least six slides of recent work; an artist may be chosen from a juried competition; an artist may be chosen from submissions to the annual grant competition; and, SECCA's most important source, the recommendation of other artists who have already exhibited at SECCA.

As important to Ted Potter as institutional support for artists is public understanding of contemporary art. Before the artist's creative knowledge can be communicated to the public it must be defined with all possible care unless it is misunderstood at the outset. To assist in presenting Southern contemporary art to the public and defining its place in the historical scheme of American art, SECCA has developed a program of lectures and discussions by major art critics. Engaged for the program are Milton Esterow, editor and publisher of *Art News*; Lucy Lippard, author of critical works on women artists, feminist art and pop art; Gregory Battcock, author of critical works on minimal art, the American cinema, and super-realism, as well as art textbooks; and Lawrence Alloway, considered the dean of American art criticism. SECCA director Potter feels that this program is an acknowledgement of the responsibility of the regional art center "to interpret and inform (its) audience." It is an attempt to promote a rapprochement between the artist, the public, and the critic.

SECCA's success as a regional art center has been emphatically seconded by artists and public alike. It is a showplace for the work of the Southeast's finest artists. The test of its importance nationally, while in some ways already proven, cannot be complete until it has had more time to bring fine artists to national attention. Its first years have been very productive. Frank Faulkner, former curator of exhibits at SECCA and now living and working out of Sinclair Lewis' old studio in New York's SoHo district, is rapidly gaining national recognition as an artist. Tennessean Whitney Leland, Ford Foundation purchase award winner in last year's grant recipient's show, was surprised when the presenter of the award, Joshua Taylor, director of the Smithsonian's National Collection of Fine Arts, announced the purchase, out of National Collection acquisition funds, of an additional work by Leland. The director was also impressed with an adjunct exhibit of collages by Duke University professor Irving Krenems, impressed enough to give

Krenems a one-man show at the national collection in Washington, D. C.

The artist is original in the intensity and facility with which he realizes the possibilities of form. The artist is born with the desire to create, but he is also made — made by imitating at first and surpassing, if he can, other artists. The more that he knows about his art the more he is compelled to practice and the better he will be at his craft. Learning from other artists is invaluable to the young; it alleviates the terror and mystery of creation and shows them that sensitive expression is not an oddity, just a rarity. Winston-Salem is fortunate to have a school where young artists may go to learn their craft, and learn it from the masters.

The first of its kind in the nation, the North Carolina School of the Arts provides many of the working professional performing artists for the entire country. In both its high school and college level programs the NCSA refines talented youths into professionals equipped to handle anything thrown at them, from the lavish classic opera to the soap opera. Graduates of the school compete with, and win against, top graduates of prestigious professional schools. Degrees are offered in dance, drama, design and production, visual arts (high school level), and music. The programs are performance oriented and involve practicum whenever possible. The benefit to the community from this is inestimable because the students and faculty perform before the public constantly.

Performers, particularly stage actors, must be able to slip in and out of a fictional skin with skill and persuasiveness. This requires integrity in training and great personal drive in order to achieve intensity and excellence rather than mere celebrity despite the temptation of publicity hype and self-indulgent narcissism. From the performance and the influence of the teacher comes a lifelong devotion to serious art. This devotion springs from the experiences of those few performances that are perfect — that make the performers feel complete. The performance laboratories are provided by student productions and by the NCSA affiliates: the Festival Stage Company, the North Carolina Dance Theatre, and the Piedmont Chamber Orchestra. Winston-Salem may have more inexpensive but professionally staged shows than any other city in the United States.

At the center of the school's success is its outstanding guest and permanent faculty — all serious artists who provide models of excellence and professionalism for the student. The guest faculty for 1979-1980 will include Edward Villella, a former principal dancer with the American Ballet and the first male ballet dancer to change the image of men in ballet, and Alexandra Danilova, considered a living legend in the dance world and probably most familiar as the Russian dance coach in the film "Turning Point."

But the guest faculty only augments an excellent permanent faculty that includes: Betty Allen, interna-

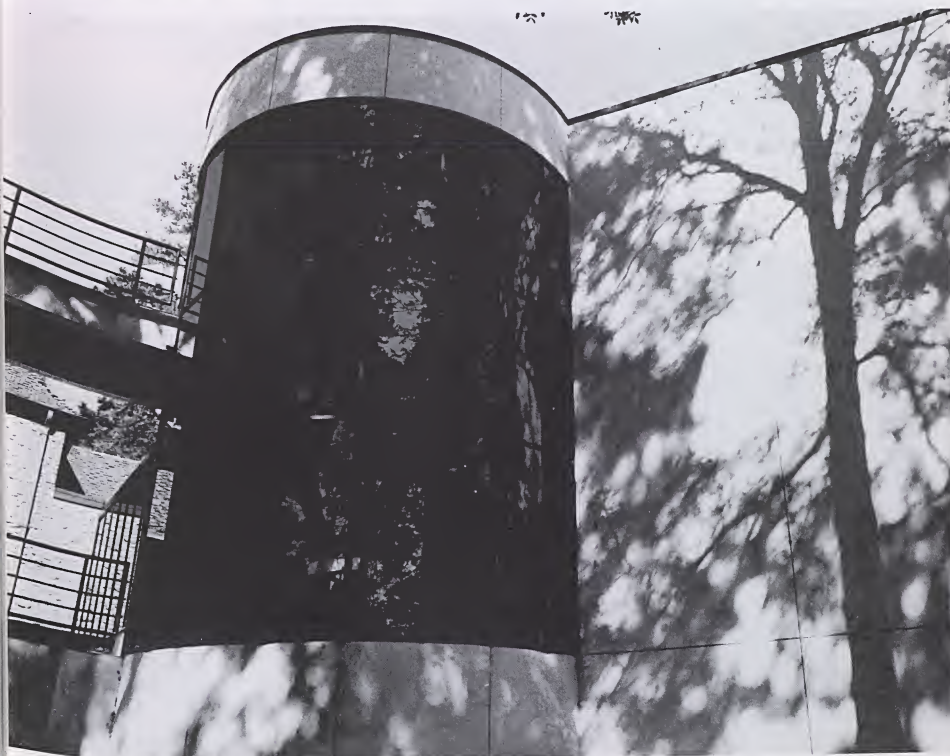
tionally known mezzo-soprano and executive director of the Harlem School of the Arts, who has performed with Virgil Thomson, Bernstein, Munch, Boulez, Ormandy, Stokowsky, Casals, and Caldwell; Robert Lindgren, former feature artist with the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo; Mimi Paul-Avedon, former principal dancer with the New York City Ballet under the direction of George Balanchine; and Chancellor Robert Suderburg, composer, conductor and pianist. The ability of a small, southern town to draw such artists and teachers is helping to change the misconception that top-quality artistic training and presentation is impossible to find outside of New York.

Students graduating from the school have had astonishing success in placing with major companies in the United States and abroad. Recent placements have included: Patrick Bissel, featured on the cover of the April *Dance Magazine*, who has been given solo ranking in the American Ballet Theatre, dancing leading roles and who, with ballerina Gelsey Kirkland, will create a new ballet this year; Gwendolyn Bradley, who has signed with the Metropolitan Opera in New York; Patrick Cea, who is with the Eliot Field Dance Company;

Lisa Corbet with the Zurich Ballet; Manny Rowe, a principal dancer with the Atlanta Ballet; and Christine Spizzo, who is with the American Ballet Theatre. This success and dissemination of talent again calls attention to the feasibility of regional art centers, and particularly the one in Winston-Salem.

The southern ethic in the arts has been difficult to pin down. To some it is realistic genre painting and the modern day minstrel show of country music; to others it is the fine artists who emerge from institutions like SECCA and the North Carolina School of the Arts. A critic has accused southern artists of "softly-insistent irrationalism," another, of a futile, comic attempt to cling to the old emotional ways of the ante-bellum South. The South has progressed to a degree of artistic self-sufficiency previously thought impossible. From the strangely involuted emotions caused by the North/South rift and the traditional rural intimacy with nature comes a generation of artists, patrons and public that has emerged into its own as a serious cultural bloc.□

Research assistants: Janet Bynum and John McNair



Stephen Tippe



Orange Glitter

The girl's jeep blitzes a trail across the stubble
leaving a hill of pocked clay,
saplings, and powerlines. On the tractor a half-mile below
in the fields the dark
inmate laborer chews rabbit tobacco with his
nose turned up.

With no brim and out of the kudzu shade
his eyes rust shut, the pulse
drenches him with sweat, his mind searches over the hill for the
girl like ivy creeping over a fence.
She's cool man: like watermelon rind
pickles packed in ice on the wooden patio tray—They are cold.
Her home must be in Black Horse Run where living is
an air-conditioned drone,
like the steady rise of the river in spring. The river floods
and she becomes a mermaid in
a green basement. She ballets
down the rapids, through the landscape back to the sea. Back
to the mother, back to the artificer,
the inmate.

His longing follows her, the fireball that pinlights the dusk,
and goes. The metallic headers still
echo in the cushioned plush of the inner woods, absorbed by a
depth of leaves, the aging memory on the
tractor.

The laborer has taken every escape eyes and ears offered
him out of his seat, his cell,
his sentence:
jeep speed; girl's laugh; star-boxcar; river-sea;
spin him out into the space,
into the other world.

Kenneth Prichard

BENEATH THE SURFACE OF REYNOLDS PRICE

Robin Byrd

Reynolds Price considers his home a refuge and an extension of his personality. And it does reveal something of the man. The walls are covered with photographs and drawings (some of his own). A harpsichord sits in the corner, littered with music books and scores. Intriguing sculptures and other pieces of art vie with books for space on coffee tables and shelves. It is a room filled with art by one who has definite tastes. Price's home is surrounded by trees in an isolated area that seems more suited for tractors than it does his beige Mercedes. It is on the outskirts of Durham, conveniently located near Duke University where he teaches writing and Milton a semester a year.

Price graduated from Duke in 1955 and then spent three years in England studying as a Rhodes Scholar at Merton College, Oxford. Since those years, except for another spent in England in 1961, Price has remained in North Carolina, less than 100 miles from the small town where he was born.

Although he is labeled a Southern writer (he is particularly well-known for his portrayal of the rural North Carolina family of Rosacoke Mustian) Price's appeal is more universal. He has written short stories—some that are not specifically set in the South—and poems, translations of the Bible, essays, and articles for the New York Times Book Review. A Long and Happy Life (1962) won the William Faulkner Award for notable first novel, and his works have been translated into at least 13 foreign languages. Soon another book will be out that will feature more prominently his years in England. There has been such recent interest in Reynolds Price that Palaemon Press will publish a bibliography this spring. Price's other works include: Names and Faces of Heroes (1963), A Generous Man (1966), Love and Work (1968), Permanent Errors (1970), The Wings of a Dove (1970), Things Themselves: Essays and Scenes The Surface of Earth (1975), Presence and Absence (1976), Early Dark (1977), and A Palpable God (1978).

THE STUDENT: *You have the amazing facility for understanding the emotions of your female characters, but the women you write about are of another generation. What do you think about women today, and particularly the Southern woman?*

PRICE: I'm not sure that I could generalize very interestingly but I think the women of my age today are still rather basically as I've described them in my early novels and stories . . . when they would have been in the stories at least they were young, women in their teens. I think they've all been affected to some extent by such movements as women's liberation and the rise of radical feminism, but very few of them that I know of have done anything very radical about the programs of those movements. A lot of women have jobs, whereas my mother's generation wouldn't have, and families are smaller. Sociological clichés seem to pertain to both women of my age and women of your age. But again I've never really sat down and tried to think what the differences are so I probably shouldn't generalize any more than that.

THE STUDENT: *I wonder sometimes what Rosacoke would be like today, if she'd be going through the mid-life crisis that many people today experience?*

PRICE: Every now and then I think about it too though not very often. Let's see, she was twenty in 1951. She would be forty-one or forty-two now and she would have a grown child. I suppose the one thing that might have happened to her that wouldn't have happened to someone of her mother's generation: it's just barely conceivable that she might have gotten divorced. I don't know that at all, but her mother had, I suppose, a bad marriage. She was married to an alcoholic. He was killed in a traffic accident after procreating three or four children. It wouldn't have been conceivable for someone of her mother's generation to have been divorced. It is conceivable that Rosacoke would have been.

THE STUDENT: *You've lived your life in rural N.C., and most of your books have been set in the area. But you spent years in England where you earned a degree from Merton College, Oxford. Have you thought about writing of your experiences there?*

PRICE: Yes, I spent 4 years in England. Three years initially, and then I went back for the fourth year later. I have written some short stories that are set in England; those stories are published in my second volume of stories, *Permanent Errors*. And the novel I'm working on now has considerable sections which are set both in England and elsewhere in Europe. I think that several of the earlier things are not in any specific setting. The novel, *Love and Work*, is not specifically set anywhere. It's just set in two houses, so I think the importance of N.C. as the place of the work varies.

THE STUDENT: *Will we find more of your experience in England in your work of the future?*

PRICE: I don't know how far in the future, just the present novel has a lot of England in it.

THE STUDENT: *Can you talk about that or would you rather not?*

PRICE: I don't want to talk about it beyond that point. At the point I've reached I still feel very tentative about it. It's bad luck to talk about it.

THE STUDENT: *Some urban critics have been unsympathetic to your characters, and you have said that many of them have a "loudly declared aversion to non-urban life." Can city-dwellers truly understand the Mustians?*

PRICE: Oh sure, if the city-dweller is intelligent enough and humane enough. I think any human being can understand any other form of life. Certainly with a modest exercise in intelligence you can understand any other form of human life as you can understand any other kind of animal life. You know why hyenas behave in the way they do, or gorillas, now that biologists have studied animal life as long as they have.

I think it's only human failing on the part of urban critics: after all, there was a time in America in which Southern critics were much more popular and powerful in their national influence than they are now. Such people as Allen Tate, Cleanth Brooks, Robert Penn Warren, and so forth. In many ways they were the critical establishment in the 40s in the United States . . . so I think a little bit of what's happened now, a sort of unfashionability—in a very trivial sense—of Southern writing, is only one of those perfectly normal swingings of the pendulum. Southern writers and Southern critics were basically the establishment in the 40s and early 50s, and that particular pendulum swung much more in the direction of urban American Jewish writers simply because there is no significant number of Jewish writers in America that come from rural areas. So by default, the powerful writers and critics—powerful in terms of reputation and influence—of the last 15 years, I'd say, have been largely heard. I haven't been terribly bothered by that swing; that sort of thing has not interested me very much. In no case has any book of mine gone without a number of very sympathetic readers and commentators. It's possible to get momentarily annoyed by a particular piece of journalistic nonsense but it doesn't seem to go with me much deeper than annoyance.

THE STUDENT: *Where do you think the pendulum is now? Is it in the urban, is it swinging back, or is it swinging into a new sector?*

PRICE: I'm not a very close watcher of it, I don't read

any literary magazines with any regularity, it's not the sort of thing that interests me very much right now. Literary politics have never interested me or I wouldn't be living in North Carolina, I'd be living in New York or Connecticut where I'd be very near the center of all that. It seems to me that the particular center has really nothing to do with the actual writing itself. And it's no accident that of the best writers of the last 50 years in America, virtually none of them has lived or worked in a large American urban center. If we just go down the list of Fitzgerald, Hemingway, Faulkner, Eudora Welty, and name one who lives in a big city; there isn't one that I can think of. Saul Bellow lived in Chicago, but other than that it's hard to come up with really powerful and first-rate writers in America who have a profound relationship with a city.

New York is the center of publishing and reviewing—that's where all of it is—and that's its only relationship to literature in this country. Those are very important factors, obviously, but they are by no means the centers of the process that I happen to be involved in—writing the books. If I get annoyed with particular brands of urban obtuseness, I get annoyed because it seems to me it often comes between a book and its potential audience, not only in the case of my own books but also of many other writers. By no means are all those other writers Southern, I think there have been all types of writing and art in general in America which don't get the sort of critical attention that they might simply because they don't have close relationships with the Northeast: American Indian life, American black life, almost any kind of minority writing in America, any kind of writing which might be called having a regional flavor, Southwestern writing, the writing of the Plains states. When I was a member of the literature Grants Panel for the National Endowment for the Arts, I was tremendously impressed with the vitality of regional writing in this country, a great deal of which never gets any sort of wide attention, simply because it's a kind of writing that does not get the attention of New York journalists, critics.

THE STUDENT: *How can we encourage more of this regional writing?*

PRICE: The National Endowment, for one thing, does a lot in terms of providing grants and helping to get writing of that sort published, and disseminating it. Nothing very much can be done as long as the main lord high executioner of American books happens to be one magazine—the *New York Times Book Review*. I write reviews for the *New York Times Book Review* and I think it's seriously and responsibly run, but I think the members of the staff themselves would be the first to say that it's extremely unhealthy that a single periodical should have the sort of commercial influence that the *Times* has. And that's true not only of literature but of dance and music. To some extent that influence is the

result of economic catastrophe, which was the death in New York City of all the major newspapers except the *Times*. If there were the five or six papers that there used to be 20 years ago then the power of the *Times* would by no means be as great as it is now. Another interesting factor is that the only other paper in the United States besides the *Times* which has seriously tried to have a really good book review is the *Washington Post*. It's scandalous how bad the book sections of virtually every other American newspaper are, including the other major American magazines.

THE STUDENT: *How can they improve these?*

PRICE: They don't want to. Books don't make money for the papers. They don't generate as much profit. If publishers are going to advertise, they're not going to advertise in the Chicago book section or the San Francisco book section. They ought to; the publishers themselves are very limited in their understanding of where books get sold in the country. A high proportion of books in America are sold in New York City, an incredible figure like 16 percent. New York is a big reader in comparison with the rest of the country, and I believe the reason why the rest of the country does not read as much is because they're hustled very little. Publishers have basically written off the rest of the country in terms of advertising.

THE STUDENT: *You must be pleased that your works have been translated into 13 foreign languages. What aspect of your writing do you think might appeal to the foreign audience?*

PRICE: I'm very pleased (it may have been more than 13, I haven't counted lately). It's a hard question to answer because I suppose the answer is something boring like the universal human aspect. The fact is, any intelligent, well-meaning human being can understand anything. It always amazes me when I hear men say they do not understand women, and when women say they can't understand men. Well, why can't they? There are only two sexes in the world—at least that are called human—and most of us must have been reared in the presence of both sexes. So if in fact we've been attentive human beings, we should be able to understand them. And obviously, the Russians can understand Americans perfectly well, and Americans can understand Russians.

THE STUDENT: *You've talked in previous interviews and articles about the comic elements in your work, and you have said all your works are comic in a sense. Could you explain what your definition of comedy is?*

PRICE: I've never sat down and thought of any water-tight definition of comedy. I think what I mean in describing my works as comic is that all of them seem to be characterized not only by very large amounts of humor, of laughter, on the part of the characters, and

occasionally at the expense of the characters, but also by a sense that their lives display evidences of an order in human life, and an order in the nature of the world which is basically benevolent. And that a picture of that order or the hints, the evidence of that order which we're given by the world, by nature, is destined to be a comic picture; that it is an ultimately happy picture as opposed to an ultimately tragic picture. In the end, I suppose it would be defined as the religious versus nonreligious. A religious writer is a writer who perceives that the world is a place created by the creator, and that creation has convincing evidence of the creator, and by definition, such a creation is a benevolent creation and a picture of it would be a comic picture, not a farcical picture, but comic in the sense that Dante's poem about heaven and hell is called the *comedia*. Not because it's a comedy like Neil Simon or the Marx Brothers, but because it's a picture of a happy universe, a universe which is planned by a creator and which proceeds according to this plan.

THE STUDENT: *What about laughter? Is that an important element?*

PRICE: Yes, I couldn't imagine writing 2 pages without a laugh. It's just the sort of families I grew up in, both of which were famously good humored families, witty families, so it's just in my nature to see a good deal of that's funny in human lives.

THE STUDENT: *I understand a small book of poetry will be coming out in December. Do you write a lot of poetry?*

PRICE: I've written a lot of poems in the last three or four years. I published my second volume of short stories in 1970, and since then I haven't really written any prose short stories. I spent a good deal of time from 1954 to 1970 writing short stories and short prose narratives. Since then, for reasons that I haven't tried to analyze, the short narratives that have been occurring to me have been occurring to me in the form of poems, in verse, and I've just been writing them that way. After all I wrote a lot of poems—not very good ones—long before I ever began to write fiction, as I think most fiction writers have done. Most gifted, young writers generally begin by writing poetry for complicated reasons, some of which are social. You're encouraged to write poems in school, and poems are generally short. It's been pointed out that there are no literary prodigies; there are many famous musical prodigies, mathematical prodigies, but there are almost no literary prodigies. Both poetry and prose narratives require degrees of mature understanding not available to children. And the one or two literary prodigies that there are, are in fact poets rather than writers.

THE STUDENT: *Do you like what you write?*

PRICE: Sure, I like everything I write; I'd stop if I didn't. I'd want to be something else. I'm no self-punishment buff. I always thought I wasn't quite masochistic enough, in this world anyway. I don't think I've consumed with self-adoration, but the poems that I've written lately I do like especially.

THE STUDENT: *Do you think you've matured as a poet?*

PRICE: I think I've learned a lot. I've learned some things as a poet. If by maturing you mean to get better, I'm not sure anybody gets better. One gets older and one gets different. I'm not always sure that's better. I've just lately been looking back through the volume *Permanent Errors* because there's to be a reprinted issue soon and I'm doing a few little typographical corrections in it. It's very hard to read back over stories that are even nine or ten years old because the temptation is to want to do a lot of changing, to say no, I got that wrong. It generally must be resisted because the person called Reynolds Price who wrote those stories is really not the person who is called Reynolds Price now, 10 years later. I think it would be a form of forgery for me to try to do any substantial changing on those stories. There may be things which seem to me as immaturities, but I'm not at all sure that Reynolds Price in 1979 has the right to make that decision about the person that was Reynolds Price in 1970. I think it is disastrous for writers to go back after works are published and do serious alterations. There are some famous examples such as Henry James' late revisions of his own early novels, Yeats' revisions of his poems. On the whole I think writers should learn to leave well enough alone, to respect the person they were when they wrote it, and to continue to write as the person is on any given day and not to try and go back and constantly revise. Yeats talked about the revision of his own works. He said "it is myself that I remake." But one can't remake themselves; one can just become himself, he can't remake the old self. It's a terrible mistake to try. Past is past.

THE STUDENT: *You read a lot of Tolstoy . . .*

PRICE: I've read essentially everything that's been translated into English. I don't go on reading it continuously, but every now and then I read *Anna Karenina* or some of the stories again. I've read it so much, most of it is engraven in my memory.

THE STUDENT: *Like him, you have the mastery of the realistic detail and an understanding of your characters. Tolstoy wrote about families and you did too, and especially in The Surface of Earth where you wrote about four generations of an American family. I wonder if you see any parallels between Tolstoy and yourself?*

PRICE: I never sat down and tried to think the parallels out. When I was first beginning to think of

myself as a writer who would write as his main means of work—when I was about your age, about 20, 21, 22—Tolstoy was the writer that I was reading obsessively. He is a writer who can keep one steadily busy for years if one decides to read all of him that's available in English. Through the years I've taught novels and stories of Tolstoy in classes of mine, so I've gone on having an intense relationship with his work and various biographies of him and his family. But I haven't tried to think out specific resemblances there might be. Certainly the concern with family, but I think up until World War II the family was the main concern of all forms of literature—verse and prose, because family was the only conceivable way in which writers imagined human life having been lived. It is only in the late 19th-early 20th century that literature becomes intensely concerned with individuals. The lonely individual with a grievance, the underground man, does not become the hero of literature until late 19th-early 20th century.

THE STUDENT: *What do you think has happened to the American family? Is it something to be lamented, mourned?*

PRICE: I think very little has happened to it in most of the world; I think an awful lot has happened to it in the part of the world you and I have known, which is upper-middle-class white America. It has virtually vanished in the social world you and I have had. At least it's virtually vanished in relation to what it used to be 50 years ago, even 30 years ago at the end of the Second World War. Whether it will ever recover the ground which it has lost with the American middle classes I don't know. And I think it's not simply a middle-class phenomena. I think the American family has broken down across the social spectrum, though I think there are many places one can go outside urban centers and find a family in powerfully good health. Obviously the family has increased and diminished in influence throughout history—the kind of family you and I grew up in is to some extent a 19th-century phenomena. People began to be healthy enough so that whole generations could live long enough to know each other and in which people lived in a single place long enough for relationships to deepen. There have been other eras in history certainly when that kind of family relationship prevailed. There probably will be again. The ties have tremendously broken down now in America and parts of western Europe.

THE STUDENT: *Do you feel the South might be losing some of its integrity as a distinct region, or that the South is no longer the South as it has been?*

PRICE: I think there have been changes. Certainly urbanization has been the main change, and the disseminations of anonymous popular culture throughout the country through television and commerce, rock music. Various phenomenon such as that have done a

good deal to rub off a lot of the old Southern edges. But I think if one gets outside Winston, Atlanta, Charlotte, or Greensboro and into the countryside, a great deal that is integrally Southern does survive and gives every indication of planning to continue to survive, so I think the famous new South is once again a convention of journalists. Journalists barely ever get off an interstate highway or out of a Holiday Inn in downtown Atlanta.

THE STUDENT: *In Atlanta the old South stands side by side with the new South . . .*

PRICE: It's like that everywhere, even in Durham. And Southerners are notoriously light on their feet in their ability to adapt to change. But the most conservative societies almost always are; they know that the way one stays conservative is to be able to make the unimportant changes. Southerners have been able to assimilate an awful lot and remain in many ways very similar, as a number of other powerful American minorities have like blacks and Jews. It is amazing how American blacks maintain their own private culture.

THE STUDENT: *Do you think that will be affected in the future?*

PRICE: It hasn't been affected very much in the last 25 years. I remember the great cries of decent segregationists, decent whites in the 1950's; one of the things they lamented was when integration comes, black culture, this valuable cultural phenomena, will vanish. Nonsense! Black culture has in many ways taken over, not only survived but strengthened and taken over interesting and sometimes amusing areas of white culture. It's interesting, just as a very minor example, to watch the number of white television commentators now on the evening news that have adopted black pronunciations of certain words, like *president*, *government*, particularly various forms of black dialect which are extremely natural and admirable in the hands of the people who invented the dialects. It's a little amusing when they're taken over by a WASP Harvard graduate . . .

THE STUDENT: *What do you think accounts for this?*

PRICE: Its attractiveness, I think. WASPS offer a sort of hypocritical puritan white culture. Blacks offered us, from the start, many wonderful alternatives, and thereby deepened and enriched American moral, religious, and aesthetic culture greatly. I think that obviously explains the sort of love affair that American whites have with black culture, a love-hate relationship they have with white culture. Why some blacks themselves have maintained it so intensely is largely a function of blacks simply not wanting to be taken over by the majority culture. They really seem to have decided they don't want to be white WASPS, little tight-lipped, puritan whites and they're just refusing to do it. And

they're suffering the consequences. I think what would be ideal would be what has occurred in many countries where minorities have learned to prevail: the highly culturally-peculiar minorities learn the majority culture as a second language, but learn it perfectly. I was interested always in England to observe how many students at Oxford could speak some native dialect like West England dialect or a cockney dialect and could switch at a moment's notice into a sort of Oxford, BBC upper-class English and switch immediately back. I can speak four or five dialects, you probably can too. I can speak Southern black as well as most blacks can because I was reared by blacks to a large extent. But I can also speak a series of other dialects, and do when the need arises. Most Americans are made very uncomfortable by this. Americans by definition feel there's something phony about talking in any way except the way you were born. But Europeans have had to do it forever. It's only because of the physical enormity of America and our cultural insularity that we feel if you're born in Poland in Chicago, you're only supposed to write Polack or black, or Tidewater North Carolina.

THE STUDENT: *Do you use these different dialects in your writing?*

PRICE: Sure—I enjoy using them.

THE STUDENT: *How does the dialect come across in foreign languages—Norwegian, or . . .*

PRICE: That's what I'm not sure about. I've read them in the few languages I can read with comfort—French and Italian, for instance—but I can't tell how the dialect comes across because that's the last thing you learn in a foreign language. I've never gotten that far into a foreign language.

THE STUDENT: *Do you have good translators?*

PRICE: They're supposed to be good, and the reviewers generally praise the translators. I can't tell. Occasionally translators write something and ask me what a given dialect means or what I mean by a given metaphor, and I'll answer their questions. But the majority of the translation has been done without any communication with the translator at all. So I haven't got the faintest idea what the Finnish translator did with *A Long and Happy Life*, or what the Russian translator is doing with *The Surface of Earth* now. They may make something totally foreign out of it. I wouldn't mind if they did. I don't have that sort of hovering maternal feeling about my works that some people do. I'm ready to abandon them once they're born. I'm like a mother fish: I just like to swim away from the brood as soon as I've had it. There are numbers of writers who are extremely "care-takerish" about their works after their works have been published. If I can, I like to be sure that any given

edition of my work in English is carefully proofread for typographical errors. It's amazing for instance, how paperback editions in America are filled with the most elementary and horrendous errors because most writers don't bother to read the paperback editions. I always insist on proofreading my own, even though I'm bored stiff. I force myself to read it more than one time because obviously far more people will read it in paperback before they'll read it in hardback. Most writers don't ask for that privilege—and find themselves miserable with the results.

THE STUDENT: *You have had all your books published by Atheneum Press. You must be pleased with them . . .*

PRICE: Yes, I've been very happy with them.

THE STUDENT: *Because they're independent?*

PRICE: Yes, because they're independent and not owned by a large corporation. Most of the old American publishers have now been taken over by conglomerates who have about as much interest in books as that sofa you're sitting on. RCA, for instance, just this week, has been trying to sell Random House. Who's going to buy it? Bird's Eye Frozen Foods. And then the literary careers of Robert Penn Warren and John Updike will basically be decided by a set of computers telling a conglomerate what is or is not making money for it. Those writers weren't making enough money for RCA, so RCA got out.

THE STUDENT: *What do you do with your free time? I understand that you're an honest-to-God Renaissance man.*

PRICE: What does that mean?

THE STUDENT: *You're interested in art and music . . .*

PRICE: I think in my free time I just do what most people do. I don't have children, so I don't have that concern, though a number of my friends and family have children. I spend a fair amount of time with children. I just see my friends, eat with them, and go to the movies and plays and concerts. I travel a little bit, not a great deal; I don't like to travel a lot. I teach four months a year.

My life is a rather ordinary life—rather boring, not boring to me, but boring to look at. It has to be. Tennessee Williams said something that's very true. He said a writer needs a sufficiently boring life. Most people think that writers are always supposed to be off somewhere doing something exciting or glamorous. Writers occasionally try to do that; they just wind up not writing anything. Writing—the writing of fiction—is a very time-consuming task. It's a nine to five job, six days a week, eleven months a year, if one's going to be a serious worker, a productive worker.

THE STUDENT: *What are your interests in art and music?*

PRICE: They are what I would call catholic-conservative. My tastes are broad. I like a great many things; there's no favorite composer or whatever. Certainly there's a small number of artists and works of art that I have a special fondness for, often for rather autobiographical reasons—so that's the catholic part. The conservative part is basically the things I most love; my great loves are 19th century and earlier. There are exceptions, yes, but I don't like the contemporary things of the last forty years.

THE STUDENT: *Did you do some of the paintings in your home?*

PRICE: Yes, a couple. I used to paint a lot when I was in high school—when I thought I was going to be a painter. Mostly I did portraits of actors and musicians—they were what interested me at the time. But that's something I haven't done in a long time.

THE STUDENT: *What changed your mind?*

PRICE: Discovering that as a graphic artist I was a good copyist but not a good original painter. I realized this would limit me to commercial art, where I didn't want to land. And I've been writing simultaneously ever since I was in the 6th grade. So as I made that realization about the painting, the writing began to move out and take over. It wasn't anything like I sat down and suddenly said, "I am not a good original painter therefore I will try to become a good original writer." Those things are not that clear-cut when one is 14 or 15. There was a realization that had occurred about that time, which coincided luckily with some good teachers of English who encouraged my writing and criticized and helped a little in high school, then later in college and graduate school.

THE STUDENT: *Do you still draw?*

PRICE: Occasionally, but not very much. I like to do it, but it just takes up too much time. It's a hobby, not a main-line—although one day I may like to try to main-line it again.

THE STUDENT: *And switch from writing?*

PRICE: Sure, I'm always looking for things to do in case the writing runs out, which it does for a lot of people.

THE STUDENT: *Do you fear that might happen to you?*

PRICE: I don't fear it, I'm aware that it's a very real possibility.

THE STUDENT: *What motivates you to write? Is there some inner drive or a desire to express yourself? Is it something that just can't be described?*

PRICE: I don't think it can be described intelligently because I don't know what makes me write. It's just what I know how to do. It's the gift I was given in a large enough quantity that I feel compelled to pursue and develop that gift. There were other things I wanted to do but I wasn't gifted enough as a child—like painting, like athletics. All children want to be good at athletics, they're expected to be good at it. I just couldn't do it. My body is gifted in the creation of narrative language. I can sort of do it in my sleep—it's called dreaming, but I can even do it when I'm awake. And the talent . . . that's the hard part.

THE STUDENT: *How does one find his talent?*

PRICE: Oh, luck and good guides. I happened to have both. The guides were parents, teachers, and family members, they encouraged me, and other writers after I began to write my own things. I had a great deal of luck.

THE STUDENT: *Do you think it would have come anyway?*

PRICE: I really don't know. I was a very driven child—not in a hectic or a neurotic sense—I was normally neurotic, but not more so than anybody else. But you see, I was an only child until I was eight. And from the age of four or five, I spent a tremendous amount of time doing what comes under the headings of art—painting, drawing, beginning to write things. I was not specifically encouraged by my parents to do this. My parents were intelligent but not highly educated people; they were not people for whom books and literature meant a great deal, but luckily they didn't despise books and literature at all. I greatly enjoyed reading and writing. They did everything in their power

to make it possible for me to do as much of that as wanted to do. They didn't try to guide me or deflect me off in some other direction. And I think the combination of their influence and the influence of their brothers and sisters, my aunts and uncles and cousins and of my teachers was really crucial. I think I might well have gone some other way. I mean, someone with the gift for language which I obviously had might be influenced to use that gift in many other ways. Obviously the greatest lawyers and judges are people who have the most exquisite sense of language. I love to read a really good legal brief. I think only really fine lawyers have the reverence for good language that writers have.

THE STUDENT: *Could you see yourself as a lawyer?*

PRICE: I could imagine myself a lawyer because I've been bent in that direction much earlier.

THE STUDENT: *In going past Macon on my way home, I wondered if it was all still there?*

PRICE: Yes, nothing's changed. It is still all there. The house I was born in is still there too . . .

Macon was a wonderful place to be from. As they say, I wouldn't want to live there now. It's important to arrange if possible to be born and raised in a place one can love and admire, as opposed to loathe. I was talking to someone the other day about James Joyce and thinking that the really great tragedy in his life was that he hated Ireland as much as he did because he was so hopelessly Irish, and I think he really mutilated and castrated himself so badly when he forced himself to leave and never return. And I can see there's a great deal about eastern North Carolina that's terrible but there are also very loveable and admirable things about it too. I feel lucky to have been born there.

Research assistants: John Hunter, Mike Riley, and Jennifer Sharpe.

Jay Meek

Fiddleheads for Dinner

1.
As he recalls it now, what had happened
was what he had made happen,
an event which was not the event itself
but the shape it took
three days out from the isthmus, on deck,
after lemon tea,
when he'd seen from the passing freighter
a man in a tropical shirt
take off his sombrero and signal with it,
as though in secret,
to which he'd answered by waving his cap,
grandly, like a palm frond
from an oasis, before he saw two stewards
fold the man in pieces
and the ship grow smaller, then disappear
from the horizon
as if it too had been folded in a mystery.
But when he tells it
over dinner, with a platter of fiddleheads
steaming before him,
in that immanence which surrounds a moment
like morning fog
he speaks precisely about bright pennants
on a windy day,
remembering what he'd seen had the features
of his grandfather
who never wore hats, and never went to sea.
Alors, alors—
If one were to say that he drank too much,
what would you say,
and that all he ever drank was lemon tea,
what would you say?

2.
Each minute in the evening revises a minute
already passing,
hours reshaping themselves in conversation
until the past
seems an inevitable voyage after heartbreak,
as certain as that,
with a scroll of waves continually unfolding
into clarity
of distance and perspective, like curvatures
of blue pottery
one reassembles and assesses in a new light.
Artifacts of things.
Artifacts of events that crest on the wind,
and then are gone,
a fork raised in silence, then the denouement.
At table, in a Maine
farmhouse, drawing on old walls for heat,
one might create a past
scarcely distinguishable from the present,
except that rain
falling from the eaves onto a car sparkles
and is full of import,
and what had once been an ambiguous gesture
with a cigarette
becomes decisive, the one act that had sent
a guest out of favor,
as if life all along had meant to conclude
without complexity
in this moment the fiddleheads were eaten,
when one could say
how beautiful the ferns along the Kennebec
were last summer.

"Fiddleheads for Dinner" will appear in Jay Meek's second book of poetry Drawing on the Walls, which is to be published in early 1980 by the Carnegie-Mellon Press. Meek's first book of poetry, The Week the Dirigible Came, was released by Carnegie-Mellon in 1976. A number of his poems have been published in periodicals such as Poetry Northwest, Yale Review, and the Iowa Review.

Meek has been poet-in-residence at Wake Forest for two years and will be leaving at the end of the fall semester. His future plans include a January trip to Yaddo, an artist community outside of Saratoga Springs, New York, where he will continue working on his third book of poetry, entitled Earthly Purposes, and a series of fictional letters that he began here in 1978.



Funeral in 3-D

G. Dale Neal

Daddy Charles decided to walk back to the house by himself. He did not tell the others, but stood alone on the porch of the funeral home, deciding. The door had closed with little noise on the coolness inside. He slipped out across the yard and headed for the south of town.

The day had been doggedly hot, and the night was still stuffy. He walked fast with the soles of his old Sunday shoes scuffing little sighs in the loose sand beside the road. He could have remembered the feel of the same sand to young barefeet long ago. He could have remembered many things long ago. He hurried on, clawing at his necktie and starched collar to free his tight adam's apple.

His father's house waited by the road, a whiteness scarcely perceivable tonight. In the easy, unforgotten motions of long years past, needless of the faint

whiteness, he crossed stealthily the sandy lot to the back door. The grating sounds of cicadas swelled up and over the empty house, so loud that Daddy Charles was unaware of the harsh raspings in his own throat.

His hand reached up for the latch of the screen door, recalling the old sleight of boyhood's illicit entrances in the still nighttimes. Well, forgot to lock up: the screen door swung negligently open. His shoes found, climbed the two cement block steps and he stopped inside.

The hall ran the length of the house to the front porch, dividing the house in two. Four adjacent doors lined the hall. Down this stretch of darkness floated half-familiar odors, the musks of sweat of lives long spent. He blinked — his eyes not as good as they once were — at dark shapes, shadows maybe fifty years old he knew as a boy here. And he remembered the old

sounds: the sleep wheezings from the far door to the right, the slight stick of tense bare feet to the wooden floorboards in a breathless journey to the far door left.

Daddy Charles stepped slowly forward, but the sound, a heavy shoe on a creaking floor, was loud even to memory's ears. He paused. He thought he heard the rasping of an old person's breath somewhere in this empty house if he was not deceived by recollection.

His hand jumped up for the light cord swimming in the darkness over his shoulder. A single pull and the hall burst into light like a long train passing from a deep tunnel into a brilliant station. A vortex of insects buzzed around the naked lightbulb. The strange smells settled into the wooden floorboards or perhaps into the grease spots on the loose wallpaper. The dark shapes defined themselves into chairs with broken cane bottoms. But he had heard the undeniable sound of someone breathing.

Moving to the door up the hall where that sound was remembered, he breathlessly put his ear to the door. There was no sound. Cracking the door slightly on the old hinges brought a narrow view into the small dark room. In the light of the window stood only the unopened suitcases of the visiting relatives. There was no one asleep here. They were all down at the funeral home.

Daddy Charles closed the door and leaned against it. Things were out of joint. Things known as a boy had taken on undue proportions. Still, he had heard the breathing of an old man in this house tonight. He found himself nearly panting for breath, unable to get his wind. Maybe a glass of water.

He moved back down the hall and opened the kitchen door. A collected drop of water at last decided to break free from the faucet and make a loud tinny sound in the old sink.

Oh my ga--
The grief hit Daddy Charles like a vicious punch, almost doubling him up. His hand went back to grab one of the chairs as he slowly collapsed into its busted bottom. It passed soon enough. He wiped his hot eyes with the back of his hand. Relieved, he took several deep breaths.

He went up for the light switch again, pulling the darkness down with the cord. Daddy Charles had heard the sound again. He listened in the dark of the empty house for the sound of the sleeper. Echoing his own breath, drawing in the same rhythm, another competed with him for the same air.

Daddy Charles turned the light back on. He sat holding his breath in order to hear the other breather better. Nothing. He switched the light off and heard the old man again.

From the road, the old rent house pulsed with stops of sharp illumination. In the flashes of light, the silhouette of a head could be seen through the screen door in the hall, cocked attentively in profile, and an arm raising and lowering the darkness. As the family drove up in the long sedans, they saw Daddy Charles. By the time

they had moved cautiously to the steps below the old man, the light cord snapped in a short high pitch. The Wade house went dark.

The Old Man was in his coffin, dead. The colored cleaning woman was the one who had found him one morning and screamed it out the back door. "Mister Wade was slumped there with his head in the sink along with the dirty dishes. I guess he was getting some water to get his pills down with."

From across the South, the blood of a few last Wades and extended clan of many Hales, Orrs, Fords were converging on a small Carolina milltown, Cawhill. From the northerly reaches of Washington, D.C., Charlie Wade drove his family down. With the car windows sealed against the oppressive summer heat and the air conditioner full blast, Charlie slipped off the interstate into the flat sand country and into the edge of Cawhill. He drove slowly now to look at the big, white, unfamiliar houses and the droop-limbed trees planted along the road as a small town avenue. He cruised into the middle of town past the heart of commerce which consisted of barbershop, grill, post office, two-story hotel and funeral home. He circled once the statue of some obscure Confederate soldier, pigeon-spotted grey, silently rattling a stone saber to the northern invaders. He drove uncomfortably past the watchful eyes of the shiftless regulars at the service station, who sat their days in rags and oil, drinking a ginger ale akin to mouth wash.

He turned by the funeral home. The houses on this sidestreet were not big or white. The fine live oaks gave way to wild growths of cedar and then into no trees. "This looks like this is it," Charlie said aloud, startling his wife and kid who had both been sleeping. Sleeping since Virginia, it seemed to him.

He had pulled the long car into a sandy lot behind a group of dusty sedans sitting in the heat. They jumped out of the car, all except Charlie who was not anxious to leave his air conditioning for the powerful heat. He sat hunched over the wheel, trying to remember, seeing this white house before him. The place was decrepit all right, six ratty layers of accumulated roofing that had to be against even this state's housing codes. The paint was blistered and yellowed on the top half of the house. Dried red mud was splashed on the bottom half, result of a gutterless roof. So far the only sign or relic of life was a stump of a tree standing apart from the house as if in a dare to see which would collapse first.

"H'llo, h'llo," and the sound of a screen door came from the house. Charlie looked up to see his father coming out to greet them. Daddy Charles was moving stiffly in his Sunday suit on this summer day. He looks so old, thought Charlie. He saw Daddy Charles greeting Alice, his "favorite daughter-in-law," waving her on into the house. "You go on in now, Alice. The women are all in the kitchen, fixing the food."

Charlie stepped out of the car. The heat was worse than he had expected. The blood drained down in his

head but was pumped right back up by the heat, like quicksilver in a thermometer. He knew he would have a bad headache for the rest of the long day.

"Hello Daddy," he said.

"Hey Charlie," the old man called back in his sing-song voice.

"Hey Chuck, come round here and say hey to your granddad." Chuck shuffled around the car from where he had been standing and mumbled "hey." Daddy Charles mussed the boy's mop of hair. Needs a damn haircut, thought Charlie.

"How goes the accounting business in D.C.? Got a pretty new secretary, I'd bet."

"Fine, fine. No." Charlie stared at the hand still resting on his son's head, the hand of a small-time filling-station owner. He can't even get the dirt out of his fingernails for his own father's funeral.

"How's the station?" Charlie asked.

"Well, pretty good, pretty good. You remember Bill Hawkins, short funny sort of fellow, he come in the other day . . ."

Charlie, not listening, picked absentmindedly at his own well groomed fingernails. The crackle of the heat and the worn-out words of Daddy Charles sounded in their ears. Charlie and his father and his son stared distractedly into spaces well beyond the others.

"... And so that fellow say, 'I thought your dog didn't bite.' And Bill, he say, 'That ain't my dog.' " Daddy Charles smiled weakly. God he looks so old, thought Charlie returning a similar sad smile. The boy, Chuck, followed the example of his father and grandfather and grinned broadly.

Charlie realized he was picking at his own fingernails and hastily stuck his hands in his pockets. "God only knows how sorry I am, Daddy. I know how you must feel. Not just about your own daddy's death, but, I mean, sitting in your filling station late at night, after sending me through a good school and me getting a good job in Washington and you and your father never had a damn thing. I never really knew him, my own grandfather. Daddy, I am sorry." The speech ticked through his brain as if practiced for years hard in a private mirror. But all he could say was "Pretty good story, huh Chuck?"

The boy said nothing audible. The three stood silent and sweating. Charlie felt an itch in his shoulders under the tailored suit from the powerful heat. The blood was pumping furiously in his temples. He pointed to the house with a gesture. "Well, we best go . . ."

"Charlie," his father cut him short, "Charlie, why don't we go on down to the funeral home. They were all fixing to go when you came. I don't want to go in there with all those women beating pans over the sink. Lloyd in there with that damned cigar of his. I don't rightly feel well, Charlie. I don't want to talk to no one for a while."

Charlie's hand still wavered in the space between them, halted in the incomplete gesture. "Okay Daddy,"

he said in a soft voice he had never heard before, "Okay. Come on, Chuck. Let's get in the car."

Cawhill's funeral home was one of the older houses in town, wrapped around three sides with a porch. There were panes of stained glass in the front door. Charlie noticed the paint chipping over one of the angel's faces as they stepped into the cool where the neat men in dark pinstriped suits waited. The narrow hall was lined with wreaths of bright stinking carnations. There was a waiting room to the right; to the left, the state room; and at the end of the hall, behind a desk and a dark suited attendant was the door to that unspeakable room for the newly dead.

Daddy Charles looked at the cards hanging from a few wreaths. There had to be a decision about which flowers to have at the church and which at the cemetery. Charlie stood in the middle of the hall, not sure what was to be done or said now. He finally broke the cool embalmed silence, "Should we wait on the others before . . ."

His father looked up with a tight face. His shoulders were stooped exaggeratedly with the rough fit of his department store suit. He said nothing, his eyes betrayed nothing. He kept the tight face and slowly moved into the other room. Charlie went after him.

The room was stark, empty save for the casket. Thick dull curtains filtered the light over the windows. To the hum of the air conditioner, Charlie approached the open coffin behind his father. He felt cold, and unsure if that was due to the actual temperature or to the unease of facing the dead. He stood by his father and looked down. It was all right. The old man was only asleep, looked fit as a fiddle, healthier than he ever looked in life.

Like a little boy, Charlie glanced at his father in relief. But Daddy Charles' face was tighter than before. He screwed up horribly as if he was trying desperately to hold something secure in his head. He seemed more dead than Charlie's grandfather. He could lie down right now in a coffin with that face. Charlie's eyes dropped back to the calm features of the old man in the casket, then up at the contorted countenance of the aging man standing beside him.

Charlie turned slowly away and, hurrying as he went, walked out of the room. Breaking into the narrow hall he stopped and grabbed an unsure breath. He moved toward the waiting room, but hesitated in the doorway.

Chuck was sitting in one corner in a straight backed chair, studying an arrangement of plastic fern set in a brasspot in the unused fireplace. Charlie waited in the doorway, wondering about the boy. He's only fifteen or so. But why does he seem so slow? Dope maybe? What's wrong with him?

Chuck turned his head towards Charlie. A desperate look awaited in his father's eyes, but the boy gave no recognition. He could only raise his hand in a small muted wave. The strange expression played in Charlie's eyes an instant longer, still hoping for some answer. Will

he ever grieve? The boy looked at Charlie the same blankness with which he always looked up to his father. Damn him. Finally, Charlie raised his own small salute to the boy's still raised hand. "Son, have you . . ." Charlie cocked a thumb over his shoulder towards the other room. Dumbly, Chuck stood and followed his father.

The remainder of the day was traveled in long motorcades tagging after the body, to church, to cemetery and cemetery once more. Cawhill seemed deserted except for the passengers of the slow procession. Blank boarded houses lined the hot streets as they went by.

The service was held at the Presbyterian Church because it was much prettier than the Baptist, a fact which galled many of that denomination in the town and the family. The filings in and filings out between the white pews were to the accompaniment of the organ. The music sounded perversely similar to "Pomp and Circumstance" to Charlie in his mood. He had been right on another point. He had had his terrible headache all day.

Following the service was the slow ride to the cemetery for short graveside rites, a hymn, a prayer under the green tent with flowers strewn underfoot. At the end of the day would be a final journey, a return to the grave, contingent on the labors of two bare-backed Negroes and their shovels. In the meantime, the plastic wraps were removed from the potato salad, and the iced tea was poured around as the funeral party took refreshment back at the house of the deceased. The sink was once more piled with the dirty dishes.

Across the room of shirtsleeves, paper plates and fried chicken, Charlie searched for Daddy Charles. He had been guarded all day by a few of the wiser, feminine heads in the family who suspected the old man to misbehave after the previous night. Charlie had been given the reprimands of hard looks for taking Daddy Charles off to the funeral home alone. He spotted him across the way in an old easy chair, listening to Uncle Lloyd who waved his cigar like a businessman's magic wand. Daddy Charles seemed all right. His high voice and soft chuckles drifted across the chatter. Charlie turned to his Southern cousins with shirtsleeves and loosened neck ties and their pragmatic conversations of college basketball and business.

By four, it was deemed that sufficient time had elapsed for the dirty work. The procession reformed and traversed the town to see the fresh grave in a perfunctory gesture. The clan was soon spread through the cemetery, counting the dead, remembering all the moments of the living used to bury the dead.

Charlie stood by the grave with his father and his son. The tombstone was neat and not too small, defining the name and limits of living: John Marcus Wade, born in the last century, died this modern day, a devoted father. Nothing else was to be read in the dirt, although they stood a long time with bowed thoughts.

Charlie had been aware of the storm clouds busy

stacking themselves high on the horizon. Now as they marched across the long sky, he was the first to notice. At least the old man would be dry this first night if it rained in Cawhill. The laborers had left the funeral home's tent standing.

He waited until the first big drops fell. "You ready to go, Daddy?" They got in the car and drove back to the house.

The old man rested dry that first night, but it didn't rain in Cawhill. The heavy clouds wheeled out the milltown and headed north.

The old man was in his coffin, quite dead. The line lies on the page limp as an overcooked strand of spaghetti. He looks at the words in the typewriter, then gets up from the small desk. It is simply not coming tonight. He finds himself looking, just as blankly as at the page, out the window of his third-story apartment.

Chuck is not sure if this particular window faces south or not. Testing, his mind gropes out of New York, down the freeways of the Eastern Seaboard, down long ago. But his mind never was very successful at such geographical castings. Nothing is there to see but Brooklyn and the odd streetlamp twilight which covers a big city, never growing into full night. Chuck yawns, with much the same emphasis as a sign or groan. Subsisting here in New York City in odd jobs, he is a storyteller who cannot tell his own story.

It isn't that he wouldn't have anything to say to such people. His own tale he remembers in minute detail. There was the odd, whispered behavior of his grandfather; a great-(bald)-uncle ashing a stogie in a greasy paper plate; his father compulsively cleaning his fingernails; the smell of carnations and death; the godawful heat raining down on the roof, turning into a heavy sweat on your back when you stepped outside; the old milltown South; Faulkneresque housing crumbling in wild weeds; Walker Evans family portraits recognized alongside the road from a speeding car . . .

Chuck pauses in his reverie. He got carried away, whistling too much Dixie. That day was like all that and yet unlike, focusing all details in a sharp defining light that itself was undefined. He is dead tired, no more writing for tonight. Off his job at nine, he has been writing since. Two in the morning by his wristwatch.

As he brushes his teeth, there is something else besides the usual face in the mirror to stare at. That day parades by with the speed of a slow motion film or a black motorcade. The story tells itself, not simply, not moving in single typewritten lines, but complexly, weaving in filaments of intimation, invisibly interconnecting the agents and not making a whole lot of damn sense to him. He stares hard at the wall and at the story he sees, as he urinates.

With a winding of the alarm and a flick of the lamp switch, he opts for sleep instead of story. But as he rolls over towards the wall, he can still hear the narrative

spinning at the back of his head. Sleep, sleep, tomorrow, he secretly pleads.

Curled under the sheets, Chuck feels himself through his shorts and the wetness drying there. Unknowingly, he has just fallen into a small but significant corner of the huge web.

The loins of an old man sleeping in a box, the boy's inquisitive eyes search them out, knowing dimly, I came from under that lower lid. And the innocent question was quickly shoved to the back of a mind abashed, not quite that childish. Do the dead wear pants, I wonder?

Chuck rolls over on his back. He is not sure if he is looking at the dark ceiling or at his closed eyelids. Tired, he is sure of that, very, very tired. Still, the old questions of a fifteen-year-old boy ask themselves again in his head.

He is acutely aware of himself beneath the sheets. He remembers the first time he saw his grandfather and father pissing together by a roadside picnic table. He, little baggy-shorted boy, solemnly joined the line, watering the dead leaves in long living arcs while the cars zipped by behind their backs. From such zippered places, I arrived, he reflects with one arm thrown over

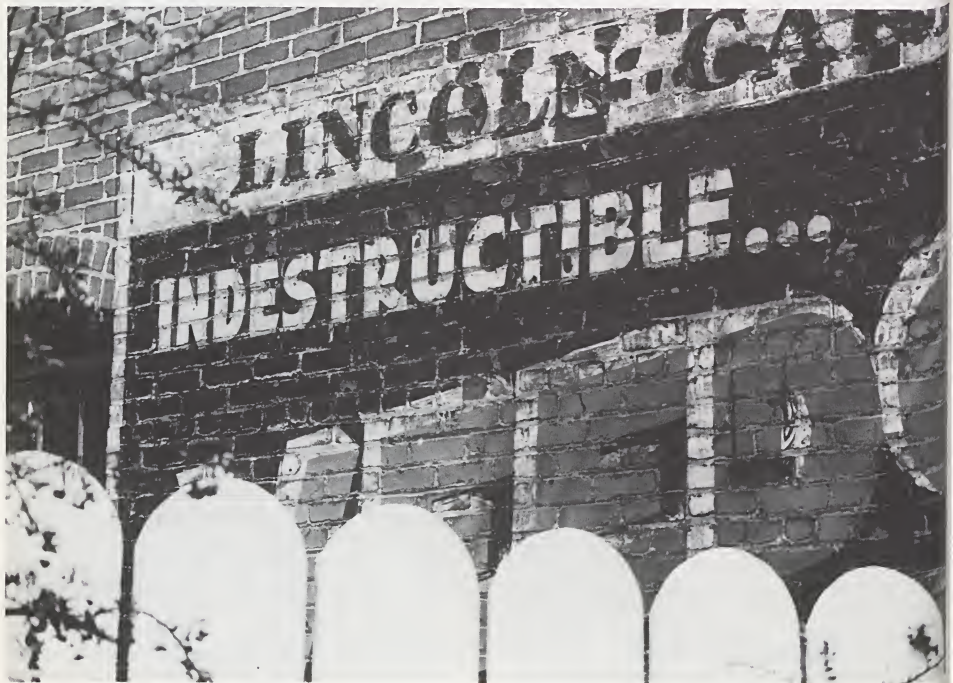
his eyes, touching himself with the other. Do the dead wear pants? the fifteen year old's memory asks again. Chuck stares at the question, at the dark ceiling. That day makes no sense any more. It has wrapped its fragile strands over him even as he tried to discover and manipulate the same strings.

"Aw shit."

He has to go to the bathroom after all this thinking and feeling. Turning on the lamp, he rises out of bed and sleepily stumbles across the room. He passes the mirror over the sink in the corner of the room and squints at himself, baggy-shorted, scratching the back of an unruly head. Recalling something he forgot to do before bed, Chuck goes over to the typewriter and rips the sheet out.

The old man was in his coffin, quite dead. Doornail dead. Dodo dead. Dead dead. Pantless even.

He wads the paper and throws it in the waste basket with the fast food wrappings of the hamburger that was supper. He resists the sudden urge to junk the typewriter too. Turning off the light, he climbs back into bed. He forgot to go to the bathroom, but falls asleep soon enough. The story is quiet, within him, buried. □



Ford Manor

Even on the quietest days the distant
Growl of cars remains persistent,
Reaching us in this airy box
We share with the fieldmouse and the fox;
But she drifts in maternity blouses
Among crack-paned greenhouses—
A smiling Muse come back to life,
Part child, part mother, and part wife.

Even on the calmest nights the fitful
Prowl of planes is seldom still
Where Gatwick tilts to guide them home
From Tokyo, New York or Rome;
Yet even this morning Earth disposes
Bluebells, roses and primroses,
The dawn throat-whistle of a thrush
Deep in the dripping lilac bush.

Derek Mahon:



The Survivor

James Gurley

The ghost of Yeats still haunts modern Irish poetry. But poet Derek Mahon points out, "It is largely an academic thing. Actual poets tend not to get snarled up with Yeats anymore." The tendency now is to become involved with the border between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. "It is something," says Mahon, "that you learn early." The border extends not only geographically but divides Ireland into Catholics and Protestants. Political tensions get into the poetry by reflecting the peculiar psychic condition of the place. "Some," Mahon feels, "try to tackle the thing head-on, and none of them with any great success."

Poetry is political, says Mahon: "It's for opening up people's minds, opening up people's imaginations which is of course a political activity, possibly even a revolutionary activity in some circumstances." Mahon's poetry opens up the mind in ways which transcend political controversy and deny classification as regionally concerned, though his poems show the influences of his

Protestant upbringing and his despair over the Irish people.

In a country "safe from the monsters, and the giants of its Celtic past, the poet marvels at the wonder — "and none is more wonderful than man/Who has tamed the terrier, trimmed the hedge/And grasped the principle of the watering can" — of a society caught up in its uniqueness in the universe. Mahon's opinion of his fellow Irishmen is less than enthusiastic. He feels a distance from the Celtic tradition and comments that

in Ireland you still get this feeling that people are living not so much among their actual surroundings as in surroundings that they sort of imaginatively transform everything into and in accordance with some ideal.

This ideal has led Mahon to abandon living in Ireland and to establish residence in London, where "nobody

was fooling themselves about the nature of the life they were living." Mahon refuses to conform to the critics' conception of the Irish poet, instead thinking of himself as a poet from the British Isles. London is as comfortable and attractive a city for Mahon as Belfast, enabling him to draw a wider perspective on the North/South border problem.

Mahon graduated from Trinity College in Dublin, and traveled in Canada and America, living for a year and a half in Toronto and returning to Belfast in 1967. He taught high school in Belfast and worked at the Language Centre of Ireland until 1970, when he left for England. Here Mahon remained, teaching and writing, until he got a job at the University of Ulster in Coleraine.

Returning to Ireland was a traumatic experience for Mahon, and he accepted an offer to teach in America for a needed respite. Last summer, invited by Professor Dillon Johnston, Mahon came to Wake Forest, encountering foreign students for the first time and a university community less than enthusiastic about his arrival. While Mahon was here *The Student* arranged an interview, during which he discussed his poetry and his development as a writer. After the course's completion Mahon returned to London where he plans to work for the BBC.

* * *

A lone survivor inhabits the world of Mahon's poetry and discourses, apparently with himself, upon man replacing God as the technological innovator. It is a world "Where thought is a fondling of stones/And wisdom a five-minute silence at moonrise." The survivor amid the anthropomorphic rubble brings no sense of order to this world he finds himself in; he merely records his thoughts as a commentator upon the death of the old order.

The visible world with all its ironies engages Derek Mahon and often draws him to write, not in praise of, but in communication with a people that have little in common with his despair. This is not to say that his poetry gloomily broods, rather it convinces us to "Watch as I tear down/To build up." But watching primarily means listening to ourselves and to a speaker who makes us aware but who cannot liberate us from the historical fact of our lives. We are sure of our ideals and of our lofty position on earth — but we can't ignore the archeological relics of civilizations that have left their legacies, civilizations as sure of their meanings as we are of ours.

A self-absorption with lives is a major theme in Mahon's poems. In his first collection, *Night-Crossings*, the poet's persona as a survivor emerges; in "The Forger" the speaker absolves himself of guilt for his "war crimes" and instead takes comfort that he shelters "A light to transform the world." But the lone survivor, with his civilized monologue, cannot act upon this light. He is the prisoner "under/House arrest," the poet who

bequeaths to his friends all his worldly possessions and whose "best bet is to go away."

The poems that the speaker wishes to address to his countrymen will not "feature/Women you meet in daydreams," but "will so derange/The poor bitches, that they/Will come round on their knees . . . croaking please, please." Under such harsh pretenses the poet begins his self-compelled monologue on the lives that are passing and past and on the inevitable flux of time, making history a nightmare from which none of us can escape. But the poems avoid being mere icons for a thematic scheme by the poet's use of verbal irony. In "Glengormley" the speaker turns a cliché around, forming it to his own intention — "The sticks/And stones that once broke bones will not now harm/A generation of such sense and charm./Only words hurt us now."

Lives, Mahon's second collection, further develops the persona of a survivor who becomes increasingly engrossed with the legacy of lives and the permanence of history. The title poem follows the various incarnations of its speaker, from a "torc" of gold to the final evolution into an anthropologist who knows "too much/To be anything anymore." But the speaker undercuts his own supposed uniqueness and stance in God's universe by warning the man of future generations, who might have once been as he is, to revise his "insolent ontology/Or teach himself to pray." In "Rage for Order" a poet, separate from his society, practices a dying art. The speaker abandons the poet's rage for order and posture, instead planning to make history aware of his inevitable need for the poet's "germinal ironies."

Mahon has said "there's no way in which a poem is going to necessarily survive in itself. But if it does, it will hopefully keep alive the memory of one person who might otherwise be totally forgotten by extension all the others as well." This effort to keep the memory of persons alive against the flux of time is crucial to understanding Mahon's poetry: His poems encompass the society where he lived and form a perspective on living and by extension mankind:

*We have tried
To worship the Sun,
To make gods of clay,*

*Gods of stone,
But gave up in derision.
We have pared life to the bone*

*And squat now
In the firelight reading
Gibbons and old comics.*

The irony in a society which like the anthropologist has lost faith in gods within the immensity of time cannot be avoided. For our junk and chemical technology "There is No-one to blame," except perhaps ourselves.

In his most recent book *The Snow Party* Mahon continues to speculate on "the myth of modernism,"¹ which has placed man at the center of the universe. With "Matthew V.29-30" — while "the offense continued" — Mahon acknowledges the state of existence where to please God, man has deleted himself and "All evidence whatever/Of civility and reflection" from the universe. The universe itself disappears; what remains is a man then "fit for human society." But the world Mahon describes as "plucked out" for some offense is finally what each man must allow to exist for its uniqueness. We may believe that the gods have banished, but they are hiding "In stone, water/And the heart of trees." Mahon insists on something beyond our own plans for the universe; that "Already in a lost hub-cap is conceived/ The ideal society which will replace our own."

"A disused Shed in Co. Wexford," considered one of the best poems of recent years, brings man's modest place in the universe in order:

*Let the gods not abandon us
Who have come so far in darkness and in pain.
We too had our lives to live.
You with your light meter and relaxed
itinerary,
Let not our naive labors have been in vain!*

The title poem cunningly juxtaposes Mahon's idea of "aesthetic longing and the historical nightmare."² The Japanese poet Basho has been invited to a snow party, a pleasant social affair. Looking through a window he is reminded that while it snows here "Elsewhere they are burning/Witches and heretics/In the boiling squares/ Thousands have died since dawn/In the service/Of

Barbarous kings—." Basho cannot escape the historical fact of brutality even though it occurs elsewhere. His aesthetic feeling will not allow him an escape from the historical nightmare.

Oxford University Press will soon publish a selected edition of Mahon's poetry. Besides the previously collected poems a small number of new poems written after his return to Ireland will be included. These poems are strikingly different: more pastoral and somewhat optimistic. It seems Mahon's career is entering a new phase, where the stranger addresses the problems of holding up the older culture in the face of political violence. When interviewed by *The Student*, Mahon, reflecting upon the pressure of time in relation to living in Ireland today with civil and religious strife, said that the pressure does two things:

*First of all it in one sense
diminishes the significance
of everything you do.
In another sense it means we
have very little time in
which to create significance
for ourselves. And if we're
going to sort things, sort
ourselves out, we've got to
start working on it very
quickly. That is, if we
feel it's important enough . . .
Hmm? To make a change.*

Mahon's poetry is his attempt to make a constructive change.□

Footnotes and Sources

¹Berryhill, Michael. *Review of Snow Party in Eire-Ireland*, v.II (Spring 1976), p. 147.

²*ibid.*, p. 145.

Brown, Terrence. *Northern Voices: Poets from Ulster*. Rowman and Littlefield: Totowa, New Jersey. 1975.

Dunn, Douglas. *Two Decades of Irish Writing, A Critical Survey*. Dufour Editions, Inc. Great Britain. 1975.

Kernowski, Frank. *The Outsiders*. The Texas Christian University Press: Fort Worth, Texas. 1975.

Redshaw, Thomas Dillon. *Review of Lives in Eire-Ireland*. Irish American Cultural Institute: St. Paul, Minn. v.VIII (Spring 1973).

Background information for this article was provided in part by Professor Dillon Johnston.

Worsening Situation

time is not a place,
nor a boundary:
time is not a shadow,
nor an ending:

time is, itself; what
falters on the verge
of death is not time,
but an assassin
menaced by time

thinking:
what goes on outside this room,
is it a trap?
and is the death in this room
the only real life?

As the disk
on the victrola
revolves
so does his time:

time to stare, listen;
while the men outside
wait by their shadows

waiting, waiting
for the end of a song;
club and net
prepared,
eyes fixed dully upon
the entrance

to this room, this world
where time revolves
and thought is suspended.

James Gurley

A Run Along Miles

No where in front,
or behind.

Empty beaches for a thousand
miles.

Hurricanes keeping pace,
too fast for breath.

Hurricanes toward the east;
probably not,

But, when the rains started, I liked pretending,
it was Hazel or Donna,

those long-winded bitches.

Bones in my feet,
synchronized to

make me rain on myself in the shallow surf,
all the way to "Crystal Pier" and back.

Summer faces just arriving.
pale momentarily;
bones still burn,
good.

The hurricanes still hold,
steady as she goes.

The rhythm breaks
just before my lungs wash up
on the beach.
I fall asleep into the surf;
Waking up,
Momentarily.

Tom Albritton

Political Machine Runs Amuck

One Cog Squeaks

Mary Nash Kelly

Jack Anderson, journalist, Pulitzer Prize winner, Army veteran and self-styled muckraker, was the guest lecturer at Wake Forest University on September 27, 1979. Anderson spoke at length on the current issues that Americans read in their newspapers each day, and discussed his own approach to public service. His evangelical style, persistence, and choice of controversies have brought down on Jack Anderson the wrath of the establishment, while endearing him to a large sector of the American public. Currently working for the Washington Post, Anderson won a Pulitzer Prize in 1972 for his disclosure of administration policy during the Indo-Pakistani crisis in Bangladesh. The Student interviewed Anderson after his lecture.

Anderson sees himself as a champion of freedom and democracy challenging a government determined to conceal from the public at least part, if not all of the truth about its activities. He is controversial because he writes about things that many people, in and out of government, would prefer to hide. Although his intentions may be noble, Anderson often appears to be a sensationalist, deliberately digging for scandalous material which serves only to infuriate the public or to destroy a reputation rather than to reform a real evil. However, he believes that he performs a valuable and necessary role in upholding the American democracy and defending it against abuses from within.

Investigative reporting exposed one of the worst scandals in American history, Watergate, and awakened the public to the existence of human fallibility in government. As an investigative reporter Anderson does not accept press or background releases from the government as reliable sources. He does not consider Jody Powell a reliable source — in two and a half years, Powell has never said anything unfavorable about the president; yet, if one believes the great mass of the media, Jimmy Carter has not performed effectively. It is naturally human, Anderson contends, to present oneself or one's program favorably. Ever critical of the chief executive, Anderson asserts the pres-

ident in particular is under the illusion that, with all the information flowing into the White House, he is the only one with the proper perspective. The regular press has the notion that because official sources are legitimate and authorized they are therefore accurate. Anderson and his staff, on the other hand, relegate official sources to a minor position in their investigations.

Suspecting the motives of official sources, Anderson and his reporters seek to examine the credibility gap between what the government states and what the government does. He advises all reporters to check into the information this way. The investigative reporter, he warns, must be extremely careful to verify reports. This type of journalism is risky because the reporter has access only a limited number of facts. A constant possibility exists that the journalist will misrepresent one side or underplay a story. Often, Anderson says wryly, the historian will later make the investigative reporter look simplistic or silly. Yet if it were not for the work of the reporter the history preserved would be considerably different. Watergate would have remained synonymous with slush and no landmark presidential resignation would have taken place had not the investigative reporters done their jobs.

When confronted with the moral implications of his profession Anderson replies that he cannot say it is pleasant to be attacking people. It is the days when Drew Pearson was



charge of the "Washington Merry-go-Round," and he did not have responsibility for what was printed, Anderson enjoyed his profession more. Anderson likes Jimmy Carter as a person, and would rather be his friend. But he feels that Carter hates him, as do many other powerful people. He hesitates to say he would do it all again — he has a sense of having trod on many reputations — but believes this work is something that needs to be done.

Anderson reconciles, even exorcises his profession of muckraker as compatible with his strong religious beliefs. Early in his life, Anderson was a Mormon missionary. His religious beliefs have found expression in the evangelical style which Anderson uses in reporting. Under Mormon doctrine, Anderson says, the eternal struggle is not only between good and evil, but also freedom and force. In his beliefs he has a religious commitment to uphold freedom and democracy, including exposing any who use governmental powers to threaten this freedom and his system.

His strong Mormon belief in the family helps Anderson maintain a healthy, normal, wholesome atmosphere at home. Despite his life as a controversial public figure, Anderson's religious background draws together his family of nine children, his wife and himself. At times it has aided him to be a public figure. In the sixties and early seventies, Anderson was an anti-establishment figure and to some extent, a hero among his children's friends. He does not hide the controversy surrounding him nor does he play it up, and his family accepts this lifestyle.

Nuclear power is one of the controversial topics in which Anderson is involved. He points to a growing tendency to depend on nuclear power in the future, yet accuses the United States government with a lack of foresight in finding solutions to the problems of nuclear waste or nuclear accidents. His stance that America should apply its billions of dollars to the development of lower risk, alternative energy sources that

had been poured into developing nuclear energy finds many adherents in the wake of the incident at Three-Mile Island. If this had occurred in the past, he feels America's energy crisis would not exist today.

The reason these funds remained in the nuclear sector was because oil was cheaper. America has been lulled into dependence on oil, Anderson explains, in much the same manner as the heroin dealer hooks his user on his drugs. Once the country became dependent, Anderson claims, the oil companies fell into step with the oil producing countries. As the oil countries raise prices, the companies also raise prices, while their percentage of profits remains the same. After all, says Anderson, ten percent of twenty-three dollars per barrel yields much more than ten percent of three dollars per barrel, while costs certainly have not increased by five hundred percent.

Still involved in this latest controversy, Anderson explains what his investigations have uncovered. Although the production of synthetic and alternative fuels has become economical in the United States, his investigations state that it is the power and clout of the oil companies that obstruct the production of gasohol and other synthetic fuels, though they are used in other parts of the world. The windfall profits tax does not escape Anderson's scrutiny. Designed to encourage oil companies to search out new oil supplies while increasing government revenues from old oil production, the windfall profits tax is a political show, Anderson states, because it would only tax half of the profits, which in turn are calculated by the corporations' accountants. By becoming embroiled in this controversy, Anderson hopes to continue accomplishing his professional purpose of both enlightening and prodding the public.

Anderson is a true believer in the workability of the American system. One of the criteria that he stresses is the continued involvement of the American public in the affairs of the country. When one asks exactly what a citizen can do, Anderson refers to

the youth of his day, who were ready to give their lives for their country in World War II. Despite the aftermath of Vietnam, the patriotic qualities of today's youth are not in question. The true question today is whether the citizens of America are prepared to live for their country. To live, the public can first inform itself, looking at all sides, then can take action to impress their views on other people. The American citizen can do so by writing letters. Anderson proves his point with the example of a man who single-handedly stirred up opposition to the proposed Panama Canal treaty merely by writing letters to leaders all over the country.

Anderson is an example of an individual who helps determine American policy. He is, in his own words, "a nobody from nowhere," who, because he has convictions and the will to pursue them, has an effect on American government. Anderson denies the individual helplessness of the American voter and affirms the functioning of American democracy. "If I can do it," he says, "you can, no matter what field you go into. Men and women with convictions are the masters of those who doubt. If you feel strongly about an issue, fight for it!"□

Research assistants: Leslie Kell and Tom Lewis.

The Oil Shortage:

Who's to Blame?

Charles M. Allen

Assigning blame for the energy crisis is a common current parlor sport. According to some, the oil companies are responsible for the shortages, and some would go so far as to think that the shortages are a fabrication of the energy companies. Others feel that the whole mess is a result of government mismanagement, or that sinister external forces such as the avaricious Arabs are to blame.

Now it must be admitted that governments have not shown great foresight in their energy policies, and that energy companies have made all the profit that the traffic will bear. However, this greed and mismanagement, no matter how much it may have exacerbated the situation, is not the cause of our energy crisis. The causes are more basic, and unfortunately more intractable, than if collective foolishness or corporate mismanagement were at fault. In the ungrammatical but wise words of Pogo, we must say, "We have seen the enemy, and it is us."

In simple truth we have an energy crisis because we have been using a limited resource which is not being replenished in a most profligate way, and like the Biblical prodigal, we have come to ourselves. Unlike that wastrel, we cannot be sure that we can return to a father's house where there is plenty and more, although many have acted as if we had that sure cushion.

We live on a planet where all activity that requires energy depends on the quota of free energy which pours in from our nearest star, the sun. Producers, such as plants, capture this energy and use it for their activities with enough over to support a hierarchy of consumers. The consumers are always fewer than the producers, and there is a drop in number with each step up the energy pyramid. Man is a consumer, not a producer, although he has made a few faltering steps toward direct capture of energy from the sun.

John C. Moorhouse

Once upon a time long, long ago, Bananas were plentiful in our land. There was no talk of shortages. Indeed, this was known as the Land of Milk and Bananas. But all that changed. Banana supplies fell, and, though our citizens paid only 50% as much for Bananas as did the peoples of other lands, sometimes none were available. The traditional Sunday afternoon Banana split became a thing of the past. The government admonished workers to put two straws in every Banana shake, to give up Bananas altogether one day a week, and to refrain from buying Bananas except on odd-numbered days. The people became confused and angry. In response, the President likened the crisis to a state of war and proposed an \$80 billion crash program to squeeze Banana oil from rocks, to develop synthetic Banana flavoring for popsicles, and to freeze-dry millions of Banana for a Strategic Reserve.

Politicians, anxious for re-election, and news commentators, heavy into doomsday and conspiracy theories, eagerly blamed the Banana shortage on an international conspiracy of Banana merchants, greedy domestic producers, and even on the people's profligate consumption of Bananas. Alas, history has not been kind to these accusations. It records a rather different tale.

The story begins when a military hero named Eisenhower occupied the White House. "Ike" knew nothing of Bananas and so was easily convinced by the delegation of domestic Banana producers that they faced unfair competition from Latin American Banana merchants. He persuaded Congress to enact the Mandatory Banana Import Program which limited the importation of cheap Bananas. In addition, he instructed the Agriculture Department to set domestic production quotas. As a result, prices of domestically produced Bananas soared, as did profits. The Banana Barons

Allen:

Throughout this history up to the Industrial Revolution, man depended on renewable resources for his modest energy needs. His foods were organisms which captured energy directly or which devoured others which did. His fuels were plant materials which were constantly renewed, so long as his depredations were not excessive. When he turned to agriculture to sustain the growing number of humans, his fertilizers were organic materials and he used beasts to aid him in his tillage.

Organic materials are involved in massive cycles on the planet. Materials from the environment are used to build new organisms using the energy from outside. Dissolution and decay free these substances to cycle again and again. Occasionally some substances may be protected from decay for awhile and be stored. This is the case of our fossil fuels which were laid down under unusual circumstances during a few million years in the nearly five billion years our planet has existed. In a little over two hundred years, mostly in the past one hundred years, man has nearly exhausted these stores to support a rampant technology and an explosive population increase.

We hear much less about the population problem than we did in the Sixties, although population is the other side of the energy and pollution coin. It is surprising to find that many believe we have solved the population problem because there has been some approach toward zero growth in this country. Even so current projections predict an increase of about twenty million in the 1980 census over the 1970 figures. In some parts of the world the rate of population increase is so great that the doubling time is less than thirty years. People in the developing countries aspire to a standard of living equal to that in the developed countries. The United States, with less than seven percent of the world population, uses about thirty-four percent of the energy. Western Europe uses energy at about one-half our rate. It is obvious that to increase energy consumption by the present world population to anything like that of developed countries puts an impossible load on our energy supplies, and every increase in population greatly worsens the condition.

For thirty years at least there have been good studies available which showed the rising curve of energy use intersecting the steady dropping curve of energy availability, producing crisis conditions in the Eighties. The warnings have been there, but only a few faltering steps have been taken. Many seem surprised and indignant that there is a crisis. The populace has totally ignored the warnings.

Although we may be able to squeeze a little more oil out of waning deposits and use more coal if we can find ways to avoid damage to the environment, it is obvious that for the long range we must adjust our energy demands to the energy input which comes from outside

the system. We have one energy source now which does not depend on outside input — nuclear energy. Here energy comes from the constant transmutation of radioactive substances which have been in the earth's crust since its formation. As we well know there are enormous technical and environmental problems in using nuclear energy. Perhaps breeder reactors and fusion techniques will extend the useful life of nuclear energy, but the problems are formidable. In the very long range this source of energy is also limited. About fifty percent of the Uranium 238 in the original earth has been reduced to a lead isotope, and about ninety-nine percent of the original Uranium 235 has already been converted to another isotope of lead.

We depend on petrochemicals for many products which have become essential to our present technology. A shift to another form of energy if petrochemicals are exhausted will require massive adjustments in our technologies and our economies. Most scenarios now projected assume that we can find alternate sources of energy to continue to increase our energy use and provide for a growing population. Since we use no source of energy at full efficiency a sizeable amount escapes in the form of thermal pollution. Very little thought has been given to the effects of increased thermal load on our fragile environment, even if improved technology can supply the extra energy.

Some economists have continued to urge that we let the market place take care of our energy demands. If the cost rises enough, demand will drop, or we will be forced to develop alternates. In the past this approach has had limited success, but at present the corrective feedback loops are too slow to be effective, and development of alternate sources requires long lead times. It is true that higher prices will reduce demands, which is of small comfort if none of the product remains.

It is obvious that our big energy binge is about over, and that we have almost exhausted the excess stores which were temporarily banked. Transition to alternate forms of energy will be difficult and problematical. An analysis of alternate forms of energy and their impact on our future would require many articles longer than this. We started out to see if there is an energy crisis and what caused it if it exists. We must conclude that there is indeed a real energy crisis since we have used at a rapid rate a finite resource. "Ask not for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee." Ask not who tolled the bell; we did.

Moorhouse:

were thrilled and they did not forget Eisenhower. Moreover, Banana consumers did not complain too much because they were told the import program and domestic controls were "important to national security."

Unfortunately, foreign Banana producers were not thrilled. Reduced sales to their largest customer meant

lower Banana revenues with which to finance their ambitious development plans. Statesmen from the Banana Republics perceived growing differences between Banana exporting and importing countries. Soon Panama-hatted statesmen convened in Geneva to discuss mutual problems with our import program; the Organization of Banana Exporting Countries was born. Internal bickering about Bananas kept O.B.E.C. from doing anything for a decade, so we can skip ahead to the reign of King Richard.

Now Richard was locked in combat with the Demon Inflation. The nature of that struggle and why he seized upon Wage and Price Controls to fight inflation need not detain us here, because what is of interest is that controls soon were lifted on all industries except the Banana industry. Banana producers were prohibited from raising prices, but they faced sharply increased production costs. As older Banana groves played out, producers searched further and harder for new lands to cultivate; but, inevitably these lands were of lower quality. Exotic and more costly techniques had to be employed to maintain yields. Indeed, land cultivation of Bananas became so costly that some producers turned to hydrological farming at sea. Inflation prompted the Chemical and Atomic Banana Workers' Union to negotiate large wage increases. New environmental edicts concerning safer Banana peels, though justifiable, added new expenses. Costs per bunch mounted. Caught between fixed output prices and soaring input prices, Banana producers predictably cut production and planted fewer new groves.

Shrinking domestic production set the stage for O.B.E.C. to begin acting like a cartel. The people wanted Bananas, but when grocers attempted to replace lost domestic production with foreign Bananas, they discovered that O.B.E.C. had quadrupled the price. Concern over high prices and dwindling domestic production of Bananas drove Richard to devise an ingenious plan. Henceforth, he decreed, all Bananas from groves planted before 1972 would be classified as Old Bananas. Their price remained fixed. Bananas from groves planted after 1972 were classified as New Bananas and could be sold at higher, market-determined prices. [Never mind that there is no difference between a Banana from an Old tree and one from a New tree.] How tricky—the scheme stimulated the cultivation of New groves while preventing wind-fall profits on Old groves. Chaos spread as Old Bananas sold at half the price of New Bananas. Everyone wanted Old Bananas, but of course, there were not enough to go around. The situation worsened when the owners of Old groves cut back sales of Old Bananas to grocers and food processors. The owners of Old groves preferred instead to produce more Banana cake and pudding mixes themselves. That made sense because the prices of refined Banana products were more generous than the regulated price of Old Bananas. Why not process Old Bananas directly rather than selling them at a loss?

Independent grocers and Banana processors were forced to buy higher priced New Bananas and O.B.E.C. Bananas. They cried foul. How could they compete with the large Banana companies that enjoyed access to low priced Old Bananas?

As is not unusual, their protest about unfair competition was heard in Washington. Richard's successor, a man named after a popular car, acted quickly. He established the Federal Fruit Administration. In turn, the F.F.A. decreed that hereafter all Banana processors would be guaranteed equal access to Old Bananas in accordance with its new Banana Equalization Program. This program created new rights called Banana entitlements. Everyone was entitled to Old Bananas! The owner of an Old grove was entitled only to a fair share of its produce — no more. If the owner used more Old Bananas than his rightful share, he had to pay a \$4.50 per bunch tax. On the other hand, Banana processors who were unable to buy a fair share of low priced Old Bananas received a \$3.00 subsidy on each bunch of New or O.B.E.C. Bananas purchased. Amid "official concern over our growing dependence on foreign sources of Bananas" the government actually was subsidizing the importation of Bananas. O.B.E.C. members danced in the streets — "first you cut domestic production opening up your markets to us, then you subsidize our Banana exports!"

Now the situation was getting out of hand. Refined Banana product prices soared, domestic production continued to fall because of the uncertainty caused by the flux of price regulations, and Banana imports climbed steadily, reaching almost 50% of total Banana consumption. The people sought the leadership promised by the new President from the Banana-producing state of Georgia. They got the Department of Fruit to straighten up the mess caused by previous Banana market regulation. DOF, in its first two years of operation: i) vetoed a swap arrangement whereby Alaskan Bananas would have been sold to Japan in exchange for purchase rights to African Bananas which could have been economically shipped to the east coast where they were badly needed; ii) overturned a private Banana purchase agreement between a grocery chain and Mexico, thereby increasing our dependence on O.B.E.C. and simultaneously insulting Mexican authorities. [Eighteen months later when DOF played a role negotiating a new agreement with the Mexicans, the price of Bananas was twice as steep.]; iii) paralyzed the construction of new Banana processing centers; iv) caused spot shortages of Banana pudding by ordering Banana processors to make more cake mix and less pudding and then overallocating the reduced supply of pudding to rural areas; and, v) launched a Strategic Reserves Program that cost six times more than budgeted and put in place less than 25% of the targeted stockpile of freeze dried Bananas.

Meanwhile, Inflation raged and with it rose the cost of Banana production and taxes on Banana gross income. High rates of Inflation meant that Banana

producers were systematically understating the true capital costs of raising Bananas and, therefore, overstating their taxable profits. Effective tax rates hit 70%. Investment in groves stabilized. Government planners came up with a novel solution — raise tax rates on phantom wind-fall Banana profits. Production fell. There simply was not much incentive left to raise Bananas. After all, Banana merchants could no longer decide how many Bananas they could raise, what prices they could charge, what refined products they could produce, or to whom they could sell Banana products. Times were rough. Banana Day parades were canceled; people were arrested for participating in demonstrations against the use of high yield irradiated Banana groves; and, the protest songs of the Electric Banana hit the top of the charts. Citizens went about their business quietly. They adjusted and endured unnecessary hardships and did not complain too much for they were told their sacrifice was the “moral equivalent of war.” And that is how the Banana famine came to our land long ago. We may wish that our ancestors understood that *their Fruit Policy was not inadequate for*

dealing with the Banana crisis; the policy caused the crisis. Or as one wag put it, at the time, “After the creation of a Department of Fruit, can a Banana crisis be far behind?”

Postscript: The Mandatory Oil Import Program was enacted in 1959; OPEC was founded in 1961; price controls on the oil industry started in 1971 and continue to this day; the Old/New two-tier pricing scheme was implemented in 1973; the Federal Energy Administration was founded in 1974; the Crude Oil Equalization Program started in 1974; DOE started work in 1976; all the mentioned DOE policies unfolded between early 1977 and late 1978. The rest of the proposals were made by the Carter administration in July, 1979.

The forum section of this issue of The Student features two views on the oil crisis. John C. Moorhouse is an associate professor in the Department of Economics. Charles M. Allen is a professor in the Department of Biology.

MEMO

OYSTERS

My mother wrote
So she wouldn't forget.

Be all grey and gloopy inside they dark hard shells
My father added
Helpfully

Evelyn Byrd Tribble

Here

"The poets down here don't write nothing at all
They just stand back and let it all be . . ."

Here no rhythm or meter marks
the living, and punctuation
is the enjambment of days
Here all the words are labels
on poisonous bottles, ads in lights, off the wall,
and books are in buildings where they
empty trash.
Here cornerstones support clots
of people in vagrant moods,
with tones that can let it all be born to die.
They can smile: Poets.

Kenneth Prichard

Lot

*And they made their father drink wine that night:
and the firstborn went in, and lay with her father;
and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose.
Genesis 19:33*

The vapor of drink
penetrates the eyes;
through the porous membrane
seep the magical fumes of forgetfulness.
The eyes burn,
they unfocus,
they cloud,
and,
in foreboding surrender to the future,
they blind and envelop the darkness.

Julia Myers

TALL SHIPS

i
Tall ships,
like cardboard clippings
pasted on the far wall's window
in second grade,
meeting a trail of sun
left behind 3 hours past.

Perfect moons
catching wind
wafting a sleek cork
miles, to northern clouds.
The moons, as far as I can see,
and dunes, disciplined by a high tide surf,
look every day;
Wrinkling their brows that can see
but so far.

ii
A minute ago; mast and hull,
puffing out its cheeks towards the sun,
along smooth lines
on past the pier.

Tall ships
escorted to the horizon.

Tom Albritton

Vancouver

Don't be afraid to dream
of Indians
The old man said.
Squinting down on his eye

He pulled on his tobacco
and began again . . .

Rotgut ain't the only
way to Navahoe

And sometimes the bareback steed
makes quicker

Than the best iron horse.

Duke Finley

Thoidy-Thoid and Thoid

I still laugh at the time
when her first y'all
Slipped from those yankee lips and
Her eyes widened in surprise,
Crinkling into dark brown smiles
As Scarlet from the Bronx
Belled

Robin Byrd



Stephen Tripp

Peter walked slowly through the newly dampened streets. The rain had stopped only moments ago—some couples still walked arm in arm beneath umbrellas, and the people emerging from the Metro were blinking at the sun and smiling slightly to themselves. He clung closely to the buildings, watching all of this. Every few steps he would slow and touch the corners of his mouth with a reddened handkerchief. He was dressed poorly, wearing old black perforated shoes, black pants that were too short, a plain grey shirt and a black raincoat he had taken from his father. The clothes all flapped loosely over his thin body. His hair hung heavy and close to his head, more dirty than wet. It was long hair, touching the collars of his coat, covering his ears and partially hiding his grey eyes. Those eyes were the only remarkable elements of his pale face, very clear and constantly in motion with a seeming autonomy from the long slowness of his stride, his gestures, his tongue exploring the corners of his mouth.

Now, he was going to the Jeu de Paume. This was the only action he had taken with any conscious regularity since his arrival in Paris a few weeks before. The rest of the time his mind was like the weather now; changing, poised between one state and another. It was like the first moments after sleep—things are present, tangibly before one, yet blurred and bent, hard lines softened. When the world is but a series of surreal landscapes. And the time of a dream, with its flattened seconds and momentary days, weaved about the monotony of conscious time, slightly upsetting it. This confused Peter and frightened him somewhat, so he did very little and watched very much—from the peeling benches or the sidewalks or his hotel room window. It was as if he had been superimposed upon the city, as if it were a cinema and he the audience, as if he were a guest.

He turned onto the final road in the now customary route. Some young men ran quickly by him, carrying bricks and short wooden clubs, speaking tersely among themselves in a strange dialect. Peter watched them as they ran—their muscular buttocks beneath tight pants, their loose shoulders, their bobbing heads. Then they turned and seemed to disappear into the brick wall that bordered the sidewalk, but soon they reappeared above on the barren grounds surrounding the small museum. It was then that Peter heard the strange, exotically relentless chant of the demonstrators, muffled by car horns and a nearing siren. As he walked up the small staircase to the Jeu de Paume, some young men ran past in the opposite direction, almost touching him. They glanced quickly, hostilely at him, and then were gone. Peter looked after them, at the crude signs they held bearing strange red letters.

As he crossed over the dirt grounds to the museum entrance, he encountered more Oriental youths with the same grim, quick demeanor. One boy was furtively passing out bits of broken brick to some others. Peter stopped against the side of the building and watched. The crowd milled about, seemingly without purpose, until someone yelled tersely and they all rushed to the frail brick wall between the museum and the street. Some wielded their crude missiles, some the angry red and yellow signs. All of them were chanting with a loose cadence that verged upon hysteria. Their target was a small motorcade of limousines with yellowish flags, escorted by several police cars and motorcycles. A brick came out of the crowd, bouncing harmlessly off the window of a limousine. It was followed by others, and someone weakly threw one of the small iron chairs that dotted the museum grounds. One of the police motorcycles slid down beneath the barrage, stopping the motorcade. A large, ugly van pulled between the now menacing demonstrators and the cars, issuing a seemingly endless stream of helmeted gendarmes. Some of the demon-

strators ran, others fought briefly. Soon, more ran and others sat down in the street or against the wall with bloodied foreheads. Peter walked slowly along the side of the building and then through the entrance as the police began to arrest those left.

The museum wasn't very crowded, perhaps because of the trouble outside. Peter had never been there without the layer of garrulous, gesturing people—fleshy obstructions between him and the paintings on the walls. He stopped a moment taking off his coat and folding it over his arm, letting his hand adjust to the light. No, it's not crowded at all, he thought, and moved closer to the walls than normal. Then he began the game he had invented here—consciously unfocusing his eyes and walking slowly before the paintings until one "stopped" him. Then he would wait until the picture "let him go." The first canvas he stopped before now was a small painting in one of the back rooms. Before this painting let Peter go, he realized that it had stopped someone else before it. It was a woman Peter had sometimes seen in the museum. He moved his coat to rest upon his other arm and watched her. She was almost as tall as he, and dressed as simply. Her brown hair was pulled straight back, revealing the clear strong bones of her face. But she was delicately pretty—deep brown eyes beaming long lashes, a small nose and full, pale lips. Peter could not tell how old she was, for some of her gestures indicated considerable age, reminiscent of his mother and her friends, like when she lightly touched her hair or the way she stood leaning slightly to one side. And yet her head and eyes moved crisply, youthfully, and she wore her clothes with a studied carelessness.

The painting had let him go by now, but he did not move on. He watched her eyes dance over the painting, as if re-creating the artist's brush strokes. Peter was surprised by the care of her eyes; most in the museum were either nervously indifferent or dully stupefied. Then suddenly her eyes were on him with the same attentive gaze, following the texture of his unkempt hair, the sharp lines of his wasted face. He must have looked foolish staring blankly at her, saying nothing.

"Are you going to say something profound about this now?" she asked with a playfully sarcastic grin, pointing to the painting.

"No," said Peter, startled. "I don't think I can."

"Not anything about the richness of color or the vision content or the breakdown of . . ."

"No."

"Why were you staring at me then?"

"Because of the way you were looking at the painting."

"And how's that?" she asked, more playful than cruel.

"I don't know."

"You don't know very much, do you?"

"No," he said again. "Listen, I could tell you about topology or thermodynamics if you really want someone to be dithering with you."

She smiled, surprised at his temper.

"No, no. I'm sorry. It's just that everyone I meet here wants to tell me something about painting."

He stood still, looking vaguely at her, then away. He started to move on.

"Listen, I'm sorry," she said a bit anxiously, not sure what to say. "Do you come here often?"

"Yes, just about every day since I've been over here."

"And how long is that?"

"Ten days." He felt the blood on his tongue, on the back of his lips. He again touched his mouth with the cloth, removing some of the sticky fluid. She watched it all curiously, remarking his awkwardness, his indiscretion. He wasn't a tourist, she thought, they were all so healthy and bright-eyed. In some ways he didn't even seem American.

The cafe was crowded but innocuous—no loonies, anarchists or war veterans. And it was very quiet, except for an occasional burst of laughter of the sporadic bells of a pinball machine. Peter and the woman sat at a table by the large front window, saying nothing now. She was watching the street, the cars, while Peter was watching the couple working the bar. They were an older pair, husband and wife he guessed. He worked with a sloppy, comical efficiency—overfilling beers from the tap, constantly cleaning clean spots while ignoring dirty ones, spilling a bit of wine with every glass he too quickly poured. His wife was slower, seemingly inattentive, but filled the beers perfectly as she looked out the window and cleaned the bar with single, casual strokes. Peter laughed to himself, then looked at the table, at their drinks. She had ordered a green, syrupy liquor. He had a beer.

They had stayed on awhile at the museum. They spoke a great deal, but always about other things and other people, with a safe cynicism. They laughed at the tourists mumbling to themselves and each other, constantly pointing; at the pretty young boys and girls looking peripherally at one another; at the tour guides straining to recite the tour books. Then she had invited him for a drink. As was his habit, a thousand excuses for saying no had instantly come to mind, but he'd said yes, thinking she'd see through all that.



She looked at him now and saw him tasting through his mouth with his tongue, checking for the bloody discharge.

"Are you sick?" she asked.

He looked up at her, somewhat startled.

"Was." He held his tongue still.

"What was the matter?" Her voice was strange to Peter, at times seemingly accented, at times very American. He had asked her where she was from, but she had just answered cryptically, "Oh, lots of places."

"Nobody seemed to know," he answered. "Right about the time I graduated from high school—this was last year—I began to feel bad. My muscles ached and I was constantly coughing and I had headaches and so on. So after the millionth local doctor professed ignorance they took me to this special clinic in upstate New York—we were living in New Jersey—and ran some more tests. The doctor said something about my kidneys and my blood cell count and that I'd have to undergo treatment."

Peter drank down his beer and asked for another.

"Treatment" consisted of three months on my back in a big steel box that took over the job of my organs while they got healthy." He was silent awhile. "It's funny—they never could

Jeu de Paume

Stephen Amidon

give a name for what I had. The doctors used to joke about naming it after me. I told them not to bother because I didn't think that anyone else would catch it. It was a strictly personal disease."

"But you were cured?"

"Yes and no." Peter drank long from his beer. It tasted good, warm and bitter.

"They let me out after my organs started to work right, but I wasn't better. I remember getting home and being swept suddenly with an intense nausea. My mother's lips on my cheek were like an insect bite, my father's odor like a caged animal, their voices and the sounds of our house—all those fucking appliances—like fingernails across a chalkboard. I stayed there six days. Then I stole every penny I could find in the house—there were many, my father's old raincoat and some food for the bus ride to the city, and came to Paris."

"Why Paris?"

"I don't know. It was the only place I could think of at the time that wasn't my house, wasn't New Jersey, wasn't America."

They were silent awhile.

"When are you going back? Do you know?"

"No. I guess when I can stand it again." Peter looked over her shoulder at a calendar on the wall. He laughed a little, nodding his head and blinking his eyes, when he read the date.

"You know, today I was supposed to start college. M.I.T. Engineering. I guess they'll have to start without me."

"M.I.T.? You must be very bright."

He laughed again, softly.

"Actually, I just studied a lot in high school. That's about all I did."

"No sports or girlfriends or anything?"

"Well, I was in the Chess Club for about half an hour. But everything seemed stupid, trivial. So I stayed alone and did my work."

They were silent for awhile. He tired of talking of himself, of thinking of himself. He watched her quietly. Every once in awhile she'd pull back her hair with both hands, starting at the forehead and slowly pulling back her head and closing her eyes until her hands clasped behind her. Then she'd drop her head and stare boldly at him and smile slightly. He found this gesture alluringly girlish. Yet he couldn't help but notice her aged hands. Ugly hands, the fingers too long and the palms too wide. The bones of each knuckle were so wide that they seemed to cut each finger into two separate parts, the second of which was tipped by a small and cracked fingernail. Thick blue veins emerged from her wrists and the backs of her hands. The tip of the smallest finger of her left hand had been somehow severed, vertically, so that it ended in an unbalanced point. She wore a simple silver band on that same hand. And yet her eyes seemed so vibrant, her body so thin and agile beneath her loose clothing that her hands and occasional womanly gestures only confused Peter.

"But what about you?" he asked. "What are you doing here?"

"Nothing. Or rather, I'm also waiting until the time again comes when I can stand it."

"It?"

"Working as an assistant to an archaeologist."

"That must have been fascinating," Peter said quietly.

"Well yes, from the moment I got the job until I began to work. That consisted of very slowly and carefully digging holes, layer after layer, uncovering some interesting and some not so interesting artifacts, giving them to my boss and then never hearing another word about it."

"At least you got to see some interesting places."

"We never left the state of Arizona, which isn't all that interesting."

It had become dark as they talked. Peter realized how poor he was doing at making conversation. And she had shifted uneasily in her chair as she spoke of herself, and now wanted to change the subject.

"Why do you go to the Jeu de Paume every day?" she asked.

He looked down at the table for awhile, his eyes tracing the confused pattern made in the white tablecloth by a spilled drop of her drink.

"I don't know. Don't ask me that, O.K.? I'm afraid," answered I'd sound like one of those idiots in the museum."

She stared at him as he looked down.

"I guess it just helps to clear up my mind, helps to clear up my confusion. By the time I got out of the clinic I could hardly put a sentence together. But after I go there . . . well, it's just easier." He smiled ironically, self-deprecatingly. "But as you can tell, I still have problems putting sentences together."

She laughed softly, then stood up.

"Listen Peter, tomorrow there is a party with some people know here. I'd like you to come, if you want."

Peter looked past her, twisting his napkin, watching the light behind the bar carefully filling a fistful of beer mugs. Then he looked up at her, standing above him.

"Sure," he said.

"O.K. then, I'll meet you back here tomorrow night at eight or so."

He watched her walk away, her hips swinging, her hair running over her hair, her head moving nervously about. When she was out of sight he rose and paid the bill and walked back to his apartment.

As soon as he entered his room that night, he collapsed fully dressed on his bed. He was exhausted, for although he had done little work, he had been more than he was used to. The room was small and cheap; a peeling dresser, a small sink that screamed mercilessly when the hot water faucet was opened, a useless bed, a saggy bed. But Peter liked it all, especially the garish yellow wallpaper. He would often lie in bed and trace the design with his vision interrupted occasionally by cracks and stains. He had enough money to find a sterile, unblemished place but he had chosen squalor instead.

Tonight he did not keep his eyes open for long. Before he fell asleep, however, he realized that he had forgotten to eat. He felt the hunger in his stomach, in the overactive saliva in his mouth and throat. But he did not move, not even for a drop of water. He had not felt hunger for a long, long time, and there was something very pleasing about the sensation.

He sat on a ragged giant bean bag, holding a tumbler of cheap wine and watching the people around him. The party was in a small apartment, but it was uncrowded. Only about twenty people. Most of them were French, although he had been introduced to an American boy his age named Ralph. Peter liked the strange clothing of the French kids—the purple and red, the scarves and clog shoes. A lulling jazz, American jazz, was being played over the stereo. There was only minor furniture in the apartment, but the walls were busy with pictures of modern paintings and posters of Che Gueverra, Chaplin, Sitting Bull and others. Peter thought an ultraviolet light would have been more appropriate than the stark yellow one above them. Ralph, who was "crashing" here, had informed him that they did have one, but that it had burned out a few days before.

Peter looked across the room at her, talking to some people on a couch. Ann. He hadn't known her name until tonight, he didn't realize he had forgotten to ask until they had been together long enough where it would have been indelicate to ask. And so he had waited for her to bring it up. But Peter didn't enjoy playing those kinds of games as much as he used to, and had asked her name tonight before they had even spoken. Now, she looked over at him and smiled.

"Hey—Peter, is it?" It was Ralph. He stood above Peter, holding a glass of wine, swaying slightly.

"Can I sit down, Peter?"

"Sure."

He sat down heavily, awkwardly, spilling a little wine on his shirt. It was a tight, silky black shirt, obviously bought in Europe, as were the purple scarf, the sandals and the tight beaded necklace. But his pants were Levis and his hair recently blown dry.

"How long have you been here, Peter?"

"About two weeks."

"I've been here four months. Been everywhere. This is my last week, my final bash in Paris." He smiled. Peter didn't.

"You been anywhere but Paris?"

"No."

"What've you seen here that you liked?"

"The subway."

Peter really wanted Ralph to go away. He reeked of home. But he was either too stupid or too drunk—probably a combination—to understand Peter's rudeness.

"You know, I feel people like us have a lot in common."

"You do," Peter looked sideways at the boy.

"Yeah. We're both searchers, you know. I came over here in search of something but I wasn't sure what it was. Until I got to Greece. One night I was sitting on the beach, watching the moon over the water, and . . . I found myself. Do you know what I mean?"

Peter stared at him, deciding whether to say no or remain quiet. He remained quiet.

"Man, I see a lot of American kids over here and I tell them just to mellow out and absorb it all and then they'll find themselves. Is that what you came here for, to find yourself?"

Peter half closed his eyes and leaned back in the bean bag. He saw the silvery metal surface, his face bent and extended and compressed, the long patent number cutting across his left eye and forehead. He heard again the machine's humming, he saw again his reflection.

"No, Ralph. I came here because I had already found myself. By accident, by surprise, by a cruel joke. And then, after the surprise, everything at home reminded me of the cruel joke. So I came here. No, to answer your question, I'm no searcher."

Ralph looked at him stupidly.

"You can't run from yourself, man."

"That's a pretty surprising comment coming from a guy who sees himself in the moon."

"Huh?" Ralph blinked.

"Ralph, just shut up and go away." Peter leaned back and closed his eyes and sipped at the bad wine. He was thinking now, remembering. The people about him were speaking loudly in French, a language he didn't understand. He let the wine rest in his mouth and grow hot there, on his gums and teeth and tongue.

"I just talked to Ralph. Do you want to go?"

He looked up at Ann. She wore a long skirt tonight and a bright, loose blouse. Her hair hung unattended, limp, tired, not a young girl's hair, Peter thought.

"Yeah, let's go."

They had seated themselves in a doorway on a quiet street, a few blocks from the party. Some hippies lay across the road on a doorstep, playing guitars and recorders. They passed among themselves a large bottle of ketchup that they all drank from greedily. Down the street, a Turk walked quickly, alone, stopping as he came near Peter and Ann to comb his hair and moustache in the rear view mirror of a car. It was a dark street for Paris, illuminated only by the one undamaged streetlamp and some apartment windows.

She didn't ask him any questions, although there was much she wanted to know. There was a strangeness to him, something behind his ironic smile and silence. She had been lonely recently, and feeling older than she wanted to. But all the boys she had seen, had met, were so self-consciously young, so vainly energetic, that they bored and sometimes disgusted her. She looked over at him, at his pale eyes, at his tongue touching the corners of his mouth. Yes, she thought, he is very young. A youth few people understand, few experience. She wanted to touch the pasty skin on his face, to push back his ugly hair. But perhaps he would get up and walk quickly away, or smile sarcastically. He was very young, she thought, too young maybe to understand.

He looked over at her.

"When I say that I was in a machine for three months, I don't mean that for two hours a day I had to lie down and the rest of the time I went out to swim or play frisbee. No—all the time. Not standing or walking, even to go to the bathroom. They used to have to come in and help me for that. Except near the end—I would just pee on myself and let the nurses bitch and clean it up. I didn't care. And it didn't matter, you know, I never really cared about my body." He looked away for a moment. "I never played sports or worked on a tan or had my mom give me backrubs or anything. I hated my nerve endings—they connected me with the world. My senses bugged the shit out of me, you know? Once, for English class, I wrote a paper categorizing all the sounds I hated. Whistling, rock music, T.V., loud coughing, the vacuum cleaner. It was a long paper. I wished that I had a button that I could turn my ears on and off with. Really. I hated my senses. They were like sewage pipes. That's what I told myself, anyway. They got in the way and fucked up my mind."

"You see, I wasn't one of those mindless idiots who worked at the supermarket, saving up to buy a car. And had lots of friends and aspired to fatherhood. I hated all those Johns. I couldn't talk to them and feel good about it. It was so damned distasteful." He smiled and snorted softly. "Half of the time I lied to myself and dealt with them, the other half I was honest with myself and had to lie to everyone else." He sat still for a long while, looking straight ahead.

"No, I had things figured out. I was constantly thinking. You know, very early I realized that I could dispute everything. So I did. I created my own system, so damn rigorous and comprehensive that I knew it couldn't be contradicted. And there were no contradictions. The world was permeated with mathematics and I knew them. I could reduce anything to my grasp. What then becomes of other people? of the body? Nothing, that's what. You tell them to fuck off. It's funny, I couldn't tell you the particulars of my system. They didn't matter much—they were always changing anyway. The consequences were what mattered."

"So what happened?" she asked.

"A bad joke, a surprise. You know, when I was told about having to have my physical functions taken over by a machine I was actually happy. I considered myself liberated. But after about a week, the joke. You see, they had me lying on my back. My head was resting on this curved plastic pillow, so no matter how far I moved my head to either side, I could still see my reflection in the metal slab above my head. Very shiny metal, light grey, and imperfect. There were thousands of these little swirling lines running through it, and the metal itself undulated gently, like a little pool. So my face came out looking like one of those trick mirrors at the amusement park. All the time. And, to make the joke complete, serial numbers right across my eye and forehead."

He stopped and wiped his mouth. He hadn't spoken this much in a long while, perhaps ever, and his gums were bleeding profusely. But he didn't want to stop talking.

"I forgot how to think. That's the only way to say it. Looking up at myself reflected, listening to the machine hum and the quick footsteps of the nurses, my mind would slip out of focus. It would be like a dream, where words and images pop up uncalled and dance around in your head. And yet I'd be totally awake. At first I'd fight it, try to formulate things. But then my thoughts would, I don't know, become parodies of themselves. How can I say it? I just couldn't think. So I'd try to wait—for it to all pass, for the focus to return. But of course it didn't. I'd lie there and look up into my distended eyes and think 'I gave up on everything except my mind and now it's fucking up.' That's the only coherent thought I had for two months. I'd cry in rage but in that damned reflection my head shaking and my eyes all puffy and my mouth tightened all got jumbled up and it looked like I was laughing hysterically. No sympathy from my own damned face." He paused. "And then the dreams."

The way he said that frightened her somewhat. He was very quiet, looking down at the sidewalk, his hands thrust in his pockets.

"What dreams?" she asked hesitantly.

He said nothing.

"Peter, what dreams?"

"Just - bad dreams." He stood up, wiping the bloody saliva from his lips. "I don't think the doctors want me to speak this much." He tried to smile, but it came out dull, contrived.

"Do you live far from here, Ann?"

"No, not at all."

"I'll walk you home now."

"O.K."

She gently hooked her arm through his and they walked. It was very late—just an occasional taxi passed, almost surreptitiously, straining against the night. She looked up at Peter, seeing the tension and the anguish in his eyes, feeling it in his arm. It had been a long time since she had been so close to fear. They reached her building.

"Peter, come up with me tonight," she said.

But she felt the thin muscle in his arm tighten even more, saw his pale eyes widen. He gently withdrew his arm from hers.

"No, no. I can't. Good night."

He began to walk quickly away. She called after him, but just then a car of drunken boys turned onto their street, yelling and sounding the car's horn, drowning her voice. He may still have heard her, but kept on walking.

For the next several days, he pursued the same actions he had from the time he arrived in Paris. He would wake up late in the morning, eat a pastry filled with chocolate and drink some orange juice for lunch, go to the museum, then wander about the city until dinner. Besides the museum, he was just killing time. After dinner, he'd go to a movie or a quiet bar or wander around some more. One day he began a post card to his parents, but tore it up after scratching out the first sentence for the third time.

But he thought about Ann often. Her arm had felt electrified touching his, and the sensation had frightened him. He had always avoided touching others. He'd be disgusted when his classmates jokingly punched or wrestled with him, or when his mother tried to hug him. Even handshakes were distasteful. But her arm hooked through his wasn't repulsive, it was something else. A confusing sensation. Every sensation since he had left the clinic had been confusing. It was as if several layers of his skin had been flayed and he were left open, vulnerable. It was as if the world were invading him. He didn't touch it, it touched him. He didn't see the world, it saw him. The sounds of the cars and the indecipherable speech, the endless color, the smells of pastry shops and garbage, the burlap texture of

his hotel sheets. And he couldn't fight it—his defense reduced to vain and frustrating gestures, like fleeing. At There was no sanctuary. Not even the Jeu de Paume. The reason he went there so often was that there the invasion was slower and less painful, the incomprehensible less anguishing. At times he almost wanted to let it in, not to fight.

One day, about a week after the last time he had seen Ann, Peter stumbled upon a group of poor Arabs in an alley huddled around a makeshift fire. They were beggars. It was nighttime and very dark. He wanted to turn back at first, but after a moment told himself that would be silly. They stared at him as he walked by, and a mother firmly pushed her young daughter in front of Peter. She stopped before him and he took her hand. She was a tall, thin girl, perhaps ten years old, with dark skin and black hair. But her eyes were a pale, steel blue, perhaps from an ancient rape or some secret affliction generations ago. Almost the color of Peter's eyes. She looked at him with the half-real, half-phoney sorrow of a beggar. The fire shone behind her, framing her head in its yellow glow. Peter froze, terrified. The eyes. The fire. He pushed the girl aside and ran back toward his hotel, followed by the angry curses of the beggars.

That night he didn't sleep. He just lay in bed watching the night's lights, the dawn and the moon sun filter through the tattered green curtain and onto the ceiling. He cried every now and then, letting the tears run down his face and into his mouth. He didn't bother to stop their flow—he was accustomed to the taste of salty bitterness by now. It was late afternoon by the time he arose, put on his shoes and walked quickly across town to Ann's apartment. She was across the street, coming back from shopping, when she saw him enter her building. She ran across the street and caught up with him in the foyer, looking at the names on the mailboxes. The past week had been routine for her also—going to parties and exhibitions, reading often. She had wondered about him, missed him. At first she thought he would leave Paris, but the last few days she had walked by the museum, hoping to see him.

She touched him on the shoulder. He turned around, looking even more tired and pale than usual. She thought that she sensed something different in his eyes; they seemed softer, less defiant and more resigned.

"Hello, Peter," she smiled at him.

"I have to talk to you."

He walked behind her up the stairs and waited as she looked for the key. He began to talk as soon as they entered the apartment, before she could ask him to sit or offer him a cup of coffee. The whole time he spoke he stood, hands in the pockets of his father's coat.

"It was one dream, one recurrent dream. I didn't really have it very often, probably only five times, but the memory of it was always there. It started with me lying in bed in my room at night. It was very dark but I could see everything. After awhile, a guy came in—he looked familiar but I never did know who it was. He stood above me for a moment, smoking a cigarette and smiling a little. Finally he said, 'If you want to turn yourself in we'll be at the racetrack.' Then he left."

"The next thing I knew I was standing outside this old, deserted racetrack. Everything was boarded up except a small gate, where the same guy was standing. He just nodded toward the door. I went inside. In the middle of the infield there were a bunch of gypsies sitting around a big fire. Some were dancing, some were singing. They were all dressed very strangely, very brightly. When they saw me they ran at me and grabbed me, pulling me to the fire. They ripped off my clothes and dressed me with bright scarves and a loose shirt. Then an old woman fed me some hot spicy food that tasted like bile. Occasionally, I'd hear a few voices yelling and laughing up in the deserted grandstand, as if people were chasing one

another up there. Once I heard horses, but saw nothing. All the while they would be touching me and laughing at me and yelling at me in their strange language.

After awhile they took a little girl from among them and stripped her. She was very young—I could see her boyish hips and tiny pointed breasts. The whole while one old man kept gesturing towards me and screaming angrily. He was demented with anger. Then they pushed the little girl into the fire. I watched and couldn't move as her skin darkened and bubbled and as her hair burned blue and red. Then they pulled her out, somehow still alive, and brought her towards me. I felt someone pull off my clothes from behind. The old man was still screaming and pointing at me. They were all laughing and jabbering excitedly. Then they threw the half-dead girl in my arms, and she clutched onto me ferociously. I could hear her crying softly. I tried to push her off me, but succeeded only in ripping off chunks of her skin. They were all screaming and laughing.

"And then it ended. Just like that, me holding this naked dying girl in my arms. But right before I'd awaken, I would look down and see our bodies, inches apart. Black and white, smooth and rough, life and death. Then I'd wake up and feel only my skin, white and puffy. And I'd see my half-moon face in the metal above me. And I'd know there was nothing I could do. I couldn't tell myself anymore that it wasn't me. It was."

He paused.

"And then the nurses would come in and wipe my mouth and check the tubes and wires and drain my insides of a night's accumulated garbage."

After a moment, she put out her hand and guided him to sit down beside her. He held her hand very tightly, and now looked at her. She reached up and touched the corners of his mouth, rubbing her fingers together as she pulled them away. They kissed him, and her lips felt good on his, warm and bitter.

Later that night, as she lay sleeping, Peter looked at her naked body. A light from the street shone past him and onto her. She lay on her side, her hands tucked gently beneath her cheek. He listened awhile to her soft breathing, watched her eyes flutter occasionally. Then he looked down her body—her thin shoulders and arms, her small breasts. He noticed stretch marks on her abdomen and how large her hip pointing up seemed compared to the rest of her body. And he saw the intricate tapestry of veins about her eyes, in her hands, her legs. He rolled onto his back.

This must have awakened her, for she opened her eyes, stretched a bit and pulled the blanket to her neck.

"Hello," she said sleepily.

He smiled at her. They lay still for a long while. Her apartment was much larger, much cleaner than his. Through the half-open window came the sounds of an occasional car or low, passing conversations.

"Did you have any lovers before you became sick?" she asked.

He laughed shortly, almost with a whisper.

"Well . . . why not?"

"I once kissed a girl after a school play or something. I don't remember. I was younger, the details don't matter. But I do remember that when I touched her I couldn't feel her at all. There was just a heightened awareness of my fingertips, my dry lips, my palms—whatever came in contact with her. So I held her harder, pressed her harder, tried to push out of myself. But that only made my skin all the more tangible. I couldn't get beyond the ends of my body."

They were silent awhile.

"And I just never tried again. It wasn't worth that imprisoned feeling."

"And with me?"

He looked at her, then rolled slightly over, pulling the sheet down from her neck. He placed his parted lips on her breast, then on her long thin neck, then on her lips. She tasted a slight bitterness on his tongue, and on her breast remained a single drop of reddened saliva, like a small and bloody tear.

They were together after that for a few weeks, all day and most of the night. Peter would usually leave her apartment at two a.m., because he couldn't fall asleep in bed with her. In the day they played tourist, she showing him the city that had only hinted at him before. Peter rarely spoke much, but listened rather to Ann. She never spoke about herself, smiling and tacitly shaking her head whenever Peter asked about her past. Once she mentioned having been married, but had said no more. Peter asked her about her silence, and she said, "I've decided against the past." That was all.

One day, Peter took most of his remaining money and bought a plane ticket to New York. When he arrived at Ann's apartment that afternoon, she was reading, sprawled sideways in a large chair as was her habit. She half closed the book and listened to him walk slowly up the staircase and hesitate for a moment before opening the door. When he finally did enter, he wouldn't look at her.

"Ann . . ."

"When are you going?"

He looked at her now and smiled his ironic smile.

"Tomorrow."

"I'll go with you to the airport and see you off."

"I . . ."

"You're an American boy with an American future that should start soon."

"Yes. But a future with no surprises, no more surprises."

"I hope so, Peter."

He walked over and sat next to her on the chair.

"I want to go home and hug my mother and listen to my father play the piano and maybe take a piano lesson or something."

Ann looked at him. She gently touched his long hair, then the corners of his mouth with her fingertips. Then she brought her hand away to rest in his, not bothering to wipe it off.

Note

The Jeu de Paume is the museum in Paris that houses the works of the French Impressionists.



Wake's \$10 Million Commitment to the Arts

The Student will be running a three-part series of articles on the Fine Arts Center. In our next issue we will cover theater, and in the third will outline the proposed music wing. This series was prepared by Paula Dale and Catherine Frier.

Four years ago Wake Forest University made tangible a commitment to the arts by opening the doors to a newly constructed Fine Arts Center. The drama of this building lies not only in the artistic challenge of its contemporary design to a pseudo-Georgian campus, but also in the challenge of potential that still waits development.

The three branches of the arts in the center—theater, visual arts, and hopefully soon music—now find themselves at different stages of development. The technical capacity of the theater still surpasses the ability of the students, faculty and staff to take full advantage of it. By contrast, the art department is confidently utilizing the galleries and studios, and is even feeling a need of additional room for expansion.

Music remains a reluctant prisoner in Wingate Hall's inadequate corridors, awaiting the culmination of the Fine Arts Center—the music wing. Plans have already been made towards this wing's construction, but when the actual construction will begin is uncertain. When the first shovelful of earth is drawn from what is now the grassy front lawn of the theater and art wing, a commitment to the arts that began in 1968 will be partially consummated.

In the process of settling into its contemporary home, a young art department faculty is still modifying and growing into a structural design that was planned largely without its input. Some of the department's growing pains spring from the manner in which many members of the faculty were hired. The faculty was

built around the facility, and the staff has been overextended to fill gaps still plaguing the program.

In the midst of forming a solid department with features like the Visiting Artist Series, the Artist in Residence and a full gallery schedule, the art faculty must still iron out kinks in the architectural design of the building:

- doors have been cut in studio walls to allow students more free flow between working areas,
- adequate ventilation has been installed in the printmaking studio,
- major power outlets have been added to the sculpture studio,
- leaky roofs still pose a problem and
- a soon-to-be-installed dust collector will partially offset the hazard of slick studio floors.

"As we've adjusted, the physical facilities have become more versatile—now we know how flexible and usable the building is," says Marvin Coats, instructor in sculpture. The department is beginning to feel comfortable in its sleek new wing, and is even feeling cramped for space. An upper room intended as an art library is being used as a studio, crowding out slide boxes, due to growing demand for studio courses.

Apparently, art is gaining in popularity with students, who have pushed their way into art history and studio courses at both introductory and upper levels. Department chairman Bob Knott indicates that demand for courses has increased in the last two years, including a rise in freshman art majors; but with the uncertainty of faculty, the department has been forced to rely on part-time instructors to fill teaching positions. This year the faculty expanded to include two more art historians, rounding out the department faculty to four art historians able to represent ancient art, American art, Renaissance art and modern art, and three studio instructors.

Visual arts are coming into prominence at Wake Forest. Not only artists from around the country being brought in to work with students, but the department studio instructors have also had exhibits at Winston-Salem and out of state. Marvin Coats, instructor Gary Cook, instructor Andy Polk, and gallery director Victor Faccinto exhibited in the Virginia Museum of Art in Richmond last year, causing headlines to appear in two Richmond newspapers acclaiming the rise of the arts at Wake Forest.

Despite recognition of faculty work, Knott envisions the primary function of the department as filling an educational role compatible with the liberal arts framework of the college. "As we have tried to state them, the goals of the department are to provide a curriculum that integrates with the total liberal arts curriculum of the university," says Knott.

How does the technical mastery developed in studio courses blend with the liberal arts education? "There is a misunderstanding among some people that studio development is only manual skill," says Knott, who insists "it is just as much problem solving and intellectual exercise."

The department has been supported since its 1976 move by a \$350,000 grant from the Andrew W. Mellon foundation for the development of the fine arts program. The five-year grant has been used to pay faculty salaries, to expand the university collection of slides and books, and to finance acquisitions to the department's print collection. A National Endowment for the Humanities will assist the purchase of books and musical scores.

One of the most unique arts programs in the country is the Visiting Artists program shared by Wake Forest, Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art, and the N. C. School of the Arts. In 1971, a \$23,000 grant

from the Rockefeller Foundation was given to Wake Forest and SECCA for the purpose of developing this program, which brings artists to Winston-Salem for a semester. The second half of the program allots \$17,167 to Wake Forest for developing its branch of the Visiting Artists program. Begun in 1978, the program is jointly run with NCSA and SECCA, and brings artists to each institution to discuss their work and be available for interaction with students.

Victor Faccinto served last year part-time and this year full-time as the first director of the Fine Arts Center gallery. Gallery shows were previously arranged by department members with no continuity to the program. Faccinto, who has worked primarily with New York galleries, gives the program national flavor and contact with folk artists from the southeast who have not received much exposure.

"I am trying to provide an overview of contemporary art today in the United States," says Faccinto, who last year brought to the gallery sculptor Norman Tuck from New York, clin Elisofon from California, painter Alan Seigel from New York, printmaker Dan Kiaz from Oklahoma, filmmaker Tom Palazzo from Chicago and Texas artists Barbra Riley, Danny O'Dowdy and Don Hazlitt.

Faccinto fills both galleries on a budget of \$7,000, which he says is barely adequate to cover the costs of running a full-time schedule of 12 to 13 shows a year. He praises the gallery as one of the finest he has seen, superior to his experiences with New York galleries in terms of size, access, wall space, and storage. "I have the freedom to create space in the gallery. It is more than a place to hang paintings. The gallery is a plastic space that can be altered for what we want to take place there," says Faccinto.

Due to the small studio faculty, students have limited exposure to the broad spectrum of artists and concepts. This problem is offset by the Visiting Artists and Artists in Residence programs. "It would be better

if another person with a different viewpoint on sculpture, painting, or printmaking was available to students," says Coats, although he feels the studio faculty is capable of accepting viewpoints other than their own. Coats also suggests that there is a uniformity in the Wake student body that prevents art students from mingling with artists of ages and socioeconomic backgrounds different from their own.

Despite deficiencies in exposure to a variety of artists and currents of thought, and in spite of course time demanded by the major, both Coats and Cook feel the quality of work produced by studio majors can compete with that of any undergraduate program. "Visiting artists who have been around in other schools reinforce this idea," says Coats. He adds, "Students are doing beautiful things, although they are more conservative than normal . . . they hold back."

Studio majors cite objectivity on the part of instructors as a factor that allows them to develop decision-making abilities, the capacity to think creatively and evaluate their own art. "The instructors act as guides in courses and do not interject their personal evaluations into student art," says studio major Royce Weatherly. "In advanced courses, you can take off in the direction you are interested in. The prof guides you and refers you to other artists. They let you develop your own attitudes toward art."

Students are beginning to feel more comfortable in the building—a first step in the sharing of ideas, ongoing exchange and level of commitment critical to a successful studio program. The building has its problems—ventilation is poor, and chemicals from paint and printmaking stay in the air too long—but is adequate for the needs of the students. Lack of space has been blamed on old paintings rather than poor painting. Although there is no excess room, the studios are spacious enough to paint in and yet small and integrated enough to encourage interaction between artists. "Art departments are going day and night at other univer-

sities," says Coats. "That happens sometimes here, and is beginning to happen more."

The building is set apart from the rest of the campus, but rather than causing isolation, the distance allows students to work unhindered. Any isolation is self-imposed and may be necessary for the creativity and integrity of the art. However, many students do not frequent the Fine Arts Center. One art major would "like to see other people have more exposure to the department . . . when they come they just glance in the door."

For the future, the studio instructors would like to see photography, ceramics, metal sculpture, filmmaking, crafts, and intaglio added to the studio art curriculum. Because money has been found for the pottery and crafts room in Reynolda, it has been suggested that the problem is not funding but definition, with pottery being relegated to a position below the "fine" arts. Implementing the other programs would cause not only the necessity of new equipment, but the renovation of already well-used facilities.

How is the administration pursuing the commitment it made to the art department in placing it in the Fine Arts Center? "Cautiously," says Knott. "We're still young and have to work to gain the recognition we need, to justify the educational value of our studio program. Because we're young, people aren't thinking we could do the things we've done, and during a financial crunch, the administration will continue to be cautious. We have to continue to prove our potential, and our record of increased enrollments, quality student shows, and placement of students in graduate schools speaks for itself."

Research assistants: Paula A. Dale and Catherine Frier

A Long Road Home

Pamela Schroed

The following is a fictional account based on a scene from Maya Angelou's autobiography I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings.

The afternoon dragged, as did every other. The hot moist air of the classroom tugged at me uncomfortably, and I shifted for the hundredth time. My motion caught the teacher's eye, and she darted a cold glance in my direction. I shivered and sunk down into my chair and buried my head in the lesson book, hoping for no further reprimand. Deliberately she went back to her lesson but not without a suitable pause. After a few minutes, my attention wandered again to rest on a fly that was trying to get out of the window. It would fuss angrily against the pane for a few seconds, eager to get into the sweet free air, and then it would stop and rest or crawl around looking for an exit. Eventually it found the opening, and I followed it with my eyes as far as I could, only because I couldn't follow it with my body. When the fly was long out of view, my gaze remained out the window, and I focused on the small Negro general store, owned by Annie Henderson. Annie's granddaughter Maya, a small and curious-looking girl, was out front raking the yard, and I watched her make a careful pattern in the dirt. As I saw it, she was just wasting her time because it would all be messed up by the afternoon's business anyway.

The bell finally rang, and I was released from the boredom of that dreadful place. Everyday the same group of girls met in the small yard out back of the all-white school to take the long walk home. I only had to go about three miles, but some of

the other girls lived six or seven away. Nobody's family even owned a horse, much less an automobile, so walking was our way of life. Being in the fourth grade, though, I only expected to have to put up with it for four more years, at the most.

We all dawdled in the yard for quite a few minutes before setting out. None of us really had anything to go home for. My maw was probably already drunk, and if she wasn't drunk she was no doubt feeling mean, so I didn't mind staying away. We slowly started our trek down the dirt path behind the school. I looked up the street to where the old woman and her small black shadow stood on the porch, pointing and fussing over the pattern in the dirt. I wasn't the only one who had noticed. Helen piped up, "Well, looka that. If it isn't sweet ol' Annie Henderson and her darlin' little Maya, admirin' some o' that girl's handiwork."

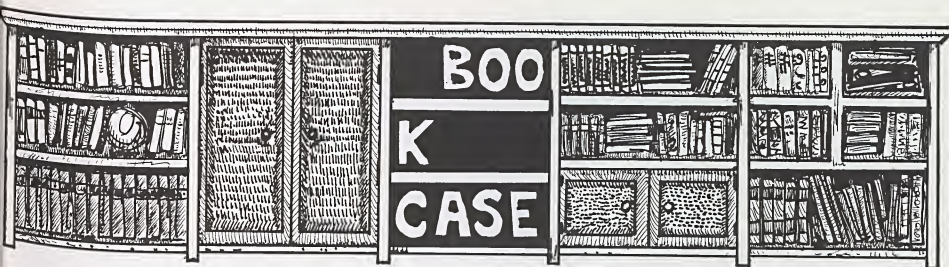
"Why, she do have a way with dirt!" chimed Eloise, and we all giggled.

On silent agreement, we marched into the yard of the store, as though we were there to prove something, none of us exactly sure what. The timid creature, Maya, ran inside, leaving her big, black, grandmother to face us alone. We stood in a tight little group at first, as some of the girls plotted out their schemes, but I couldn't concentrate; my eyes were fixed on that huge woman. She had straightened up when we came into the yard, and as we approached, she began to hum. Her tune was hymn-like, slow and sweet, and just to hear it stopped me where I stood. I was shoved back, and my attention was abruptly returned to the group, which had begun to ridicule Annie Henderson. I watched the intimidat-

ing mime with almost no feeling, remained aware of the dark, stiff figure on the porch. Not even a moved. The older girls noticed the presence too, but this only made them more determined to shake the woman's pose. They laughed louder and harder, a desperate, hollow sound of laugh. I laughed, too; not because I thought there was anything funny but because I had to laugh to belong. All of our false mirth was pointed though; nothing seemed to have an effect on her. Mockery certainly didn't work. We gathered into a group, and Ruth, the oldest, announced she had a new plan; was going to try shock. We fell still and stood back, in nervous anticipation of this last attempt to get a reaction from the stolid Annie Henderson. Almost ceremoniously Ruth leaned over and placed her hands squarely in the dirt. She kicked her legs and her skirts fell about her ears, revealing her uncovered hind. But the Rock was still the steadier than ever. Ruth came down and all the girls crowded around her as though there was some sort of victory, but all the noise was hollow just as our laughter had been. We were losing our battle, and I was ready to give up and go home, but few could not resist trying a final

"Bye, Annie."

The familiar term, meant to be insulting, fell dead in the air as our names were returned with more certainty than I imagined was possible. silently set off, the weight of common misery, leaning in on all of us. Looking back at the unpleasant scene I saw Maya in the yard with her maw again, making a new pattern blocking out our tracks.□



WILLIAM STYRON
Sophie's Choice
 515 pp. Random House
 \$12.95

Sophie's Choice is a first-person recollection of a very special summer — one filled alternately with seizures of depression and joy for the narrator, a twenty-two-year-old aspiring writer. Through his eyes the reader is treated to a rather lengthy account of a sometimes satisfying, but more often strange, relationship existing between the writer, a young Polish woman named Sophie, and her violent but charming lover, Nathan.

The book chronicles not only this developing three-way relationship but probes into the hardships, fears, and atrocities connected with the German war machine. As the title implies, the book is as much Sophie's story as it is of the young narrator, Stingo, and Styron devotes considerable time to an investigation of her scarred, guilt-ridden past.

Stingo is a young, Southern, Harvard graduate trying to begin a writing career in the summer of 1947. Fired from a job at McGraw-Hill, he goes in search of greener pastures and cheaper housing in Brooklyn. There he meets and embarks upon a relationship with Sophie and Nathan, who share the two rooms above his own.

Stingo is particularly preoccupied with the idea of sex — almost constantly so — and a good portion of his story deals with the frustrations ensuing from such a state. At times the near-constant digressions into his

sexual fantasies are tiresome; Stingo's somewhat lacking love life is his greatest personal concern. However, as the story progresses, Stingo's near obsession becomes incorporated into the totality of his experiences and thoughts and toward the end of the book provides some comic relief from Sophie's confessions about Auschwitz. Sex remains a big concern for him, but not such an all-consuming part of his psyche. To Stingo's credit, he is well aware of his general state of lust, at one point describing his body as a "six foot erogeous zone."

Throughout the book the reader senses that Stingo is really the mouthpiece for a bigger story — in particular the experience of Sophie in German-occupied Poland and Auschwitz. In the early chapters of the book the disadvantages of this writing style are apparent: all action is after the fact, and we must take Stingo's word for truth. But as Sophie's story unfolds, Styron's format turns into an advantage, for her experiences need no present tense to make them immediate and convincing.

The sections on Auschwitz are pieces of history that sober and enlighten the reader. Sophie's survival there is most bitterly bought: upon arriving at Auschwitz she is forced to pick one of her two children to send directly to the gas, and in order to prevent her own extermination she does more than secretarial work for the SS while professing the beliefs of the anti-Semitic father she always despised. She leaves physically racked, laden with guilt.

The reader must initially question the bond that unites Sophie to Nathan, a schizophrenic who alternately loves and violently abuses Sophie. As the reader sees more of

them through Stingo's narrative, the pieces begin to fall together.

Sophie's Choice is the story of two sad, intertwined lives, and knowing the two lovers has not left the narrator untouched. Their story and his own intermingled is a testimony to the strength of human love.

Julie Doub

JAMES BALDWIN
Just Above My Head
 597 pp. The Dial Press
 \$12.95

James Baldwin, in *Just Above My Head*, forces his reader into a fearful world of religion, homosexuality, prejudice and gospel music. It is a novel of coping; a bustling and sorrowful lifetime is stopped and retraced in order to find meaning and understanding. Reading *Just Above My Head* creates a feeling not unlike that of stepping into someone's bathroom and finding articles so personal that you want to slam the door and run — but you don't. Perhaps you look out of curiosity or out of perversion, but you do look and try to understand. In Baldwin's novel the reader feels the agony, becomes it, and accepts it as his own. The story of Arthur and Hall, a black gospel singer and his brother, becomes the story of everyman.

The story Hall tells involves some people so familiar they float facelessly by, and others who arouse fear because they seem too much like

ourselves. The novel begins with Arthur's death, and Hall's grieved stream of consciousness plunges into a past world as he tries to understand it. Their early lives are closely associated with the church; with Julia, the child evangelist; and with Julia's family, especially Jimmy, who was later to become Arthur's lover.

Religion is often presented as violent and bloody. After her mother's death Julia futilely tries to "heal" her, but the Holy Ghost within her dispels into an incestuous relationship with her father, Joel. Filled with fear and shame, Julia is "saved" by an affair with Crunch, one of the boys in Arthur's quartet. Thus the black man becomes God, and Joel is made aware of his nakedness and hides. Sex is destruction and salvation.

Sexual relations are pictured in various other lights. Sex is an escape and ironically provides the comfort of the womb for Hall. It is also anguished and empty. Most vivid is Arthur's touching journey into homosexuality. For him sex is pure and clean, yet since a gospel-singer celebrity cannot be a "faggot" he realizes that "what the world calls morality is nothing but the dream of safety. That's how the world gets to be so fucking moral. The only way to know that you're safe is to see somebody else in danger."

The novel provides other unconsciously realized truths. The four black youths — Arthur, Crunch, Peanut and Red — find in gospel music a means to escape their New York ghetto. In the end, however, Crunch becomes mad; Peanut, a murdered victim of a white south; and Red, a junkie. Only Arthur becomes a success, yet he finally lies with "his blood soaking into the sawdust of some grimy men's room in the filthy basement of some filthy London pub." Is there any escape, except through the humbling devices of death? Perhaps Hall's anguished cry of "Lord, Did you say something about being wonderfully and fearfully made?" is as much a plea for the light of understanding as it is a prayer.

The search for understanding is suffused with the terrible knowledge of isolation. Attempts are made to

overcome this isolation through religion, sex, and unification. Yet regardless of love or fame, Arthur must sing alone, love alone, and finally die alone. The world seems to be a series of candle-like flickers, leaving only swirls of smoke.

The novel is, in essence, the story of the black man. The south is depicted as frightening, yet compelling. Arthur and Hall become involved in the civil rights movement against a steadfast South in which black "boys" from the North must be behind locked doors when night covers the wisteria and magnolia. Arthur sings his gospel to the hungry blacks, knowing that "he was not singing about a road in Egypt two thousand years ago, but about his mama and his daddy and himself . . ." Christ will never be alone in his suffering and condemnation. Regardless of the union Arthur tries to create in his people, he realizes that each man must fight his own particular battle.

Hall's battle is one of understanding. And his equipment for combat is memory. He reconstructs lives, realizes "the treacherous role that memory plays in human life, consider how relentlessly the water of memory refuses to break, how it impedes that journey into the air of time. Time: the whisper beneath that word is death . . . Love serves, then, if memory doesn't, and passion, apart from its tense relation to agony, labors beneath the shadow of death." The novel portrays passions: passions for music, of the black man, of love, and of lust; passions that are grasping and elusive. The novel ends with a dream — perhaps one of purity, of equality, of life — yet even these dreams, when applied to reality, can become tinged with nightmarish qualities.

Just Above My Head is frightening and touching, destroying hopes, yet creating dreams. It is as fluid as the ocean, and just as violent and mysterious. It is not difficult until one becomes submerged in his own life and the shiny whitecaps are "just above my head."

Jenny Brantley

NANCY CARDOZO
Lucky Eyes and a
High Heart 468 pp.
Bobbs - Merrill \$15.00

Maud Gonne, saying that "women who have poets for friends have idea how lucky they are," realized that Yeats would immortalize her with his poetry despite the fact that she, a modern Helen, had no Troy burn. Had Yeats not been kept at bay by the six-foot-tall actress/revolutionary one wonders if Maud Gonne would have sparked readers' interest today. It is for what she represented to Yeats — the feminine ideal — that we have first appreciated her. Biographers, and most recently, Nancy Cardozo in *Lucky Eyes and a High Heart*, have sought a fuller explanation of Maud Gonne than that she served as Yeats' inspiration.

Cardozo makes Yeats the supplanting character in her biography — reduces him to the Willie of Maud's conception — a restless, child-playmate with whom she can share mysticism, dreams of Celtic heroes, and youth. Maud becomes a revolutionary heroine on an interminable quest for Ireland's identity, amazing the reader with a determination and idealism that takes her through bouts with theatriacs, disease, Russian spies, and a scandalous divorce. Her life is the stuff of which legends are made — the story from Maud's hashish mingles about the vault where she makes love beneath the body of her dead child.

Perhaps overzealous in documenting each of Maud's political encounters, Cardozo has forgotten that the Irish cause is tedious and eternal. Needs as little treatment as possible, Maud is not to become alternately obscured and distorted. Occasionally one wishes Cardozo would put skill as a poet to use with speculation about Maud's personality, emphasis on accuracy is essential to her medium but becomes extreme in a straightforward prose that has a strait-jacketing effect. Maud Gonne is recorded as a woman existing in isolation, but Cardozo never re-

offers her bias and enthusiasm for this twentieth-century Helen. The revelation that Yeats and Maud consummated their affair is a brave offering in the midst of a pleasant, but generally safe chronicle of a woman's incredible individualism and recklessness.

Catherine Burroughs

CARL SAGAN
Broca's Brain: Reflections
on the Romance of Science
347 pp. Random House
\$12.95

As a popularizer of science, Carl Sagan has proven most effective in his ability to reach the layman with his scientific view: Sagan's *The Dragons of Eden*, won him a Pulitzer Prize in 1978. In his most recent work, *Broca's Brain*, Sagan unifies a loose potpourri of 25 independent essays (arranged in chapters) with the common thread of curiosity of the universe and its operation. These 25 chapters are arranged into four sections; some of these essays are quite excellent, some are seemingly pointless. Yet each commands the attention of the reader as a reflection of the soaring vision behind science.

In his first section Sagan contemplates science and its relevancy to human concern. Deep in the dusty entrails of the Musée de l'Homme in Paris, Sagan encounters the preserved brain of Dr. Paul Broca, founder of the museum collection and a scientist of the nineteenth century for whom Broca's area (the region of the brain responsible for articulate speech) is named. In his time Broca was heavily persecuted by his government for his studies, and he left a tacit challenge which Sagan has taken to task, that of challenging our most strongly held beliefs. Sagan attempts to incorporate the vast new knowledge of science, particularly in his own field of astronomy, into a functioning scientific humanism.

As a scientist Sagan battles the fear

rampant in humanity that some things are not "meant" to be known, that some inquiries are too dangerous for the scope of human intelligence. His most sensible example is that of atomic energy. Sagan concludes, however, that "these fears are worth fighting," and proclaims a scientifically literate public as an adequate safeguard against the abuses of infant science. For Sagan, science is a technique, a way of thinking, rather than an endless body of seemingly arcane knowledge. Science is not just a methodical data-collecting process, but a method of looking for consistency in the universe in the form of natural laws. The idea that the laws of the universe restrict area of human endeavor is justifiably humbling, yet Sagan convincingly argues that "the more restrictions there are on what matter and energy can do the more knowledge human beings can attain." He proclaims the ideal universe to be our own, with a known and unknown body of knowledge, as a universe at either extreme would be "intolerable to the thinking man."

After this brief introduction to the potential role of science, Sagan devotes the second section of his work to a systematic denouncement of popularized science, or "pseudoscience," held in widespread belief. Into this category Sagan groups such ideas as supernatural power, UFO sightings, spirit rapping, and mental telepathy. Whereas most scientists would not waste time with "subscientific" bodies of alleged phenomena, Sagan attributes their widespread appeal to the indifference of true science in applying logic and reason to such areas of inquiry. These areas differ from science in that science relies on proof; Sagan rejects their claims not on the basis of their fantastic content but instead for their lack of possibility of logical proof. Sagan is confident that science can and will, due to its self-correcting nature, survive all tests of skepticism.

In perhaps his most brilliant essay of the collection, Sagan eloquently and systematically destroys the popular theories of one Dr. Immanuel Velikovsky. Velikovsky proposed in 1950 that a comet was ejected from Jupiter around 1500 B.C. and closely grazed the earth, accounting for the parting of the Red Sea, the origin of

manna from the heavens, the plague of flies, and other Old Testament phenomena. Against the advice of his colleagues, Sagan takes Velikovsky to task with ten brilliantly developed areas of scientific inconsistency. The only thing worse than the ignorant writings of Velikovsky, Sagan claims, is the attempt by some scientists to suppress his writings. His whole idea of science is one in which ideas are judged on their merit, if free inquiry and vigorous debate are allowed. Sagan dismisses the preposterous theories of Velikovsky as an attempt to revive old-time religion in a time when crisis in faith seems to cry for religious roots and cosmic significance.

In his third section, Sagan turns to his native astronomy as a means through which that elusive cosmic significance can be grasped. With essays ranging from the naming of the heavenly bodies to the effectiveness of robots in space travel, Sagan unhesitatingly reveals the wonder and zeal of a ten year-old with his first telescope. He devotes an entire chapter to the innocent naivete of late nineteenth-century astronomy in order to illustrate the enormous strides of recent civilization in knowledge of the heavens, "beyond even the most romantic speculations of late-Victorian astronomers." Sagan refuses to dismiss the subject of extraterrestrial life, although many consider this to be an area of inquiry of the same order as Sagan's own pseudosciences. In a most convincing chapter, Sagan argues the randomness of creation (with our sun a mere one of 250 billion stars in the galaxy) as a plausible reason to expect additional life forms in the universe. He takes a philosophical rather than pragmatic, result-oriented view of a systematic search for life beyond through the use of radio signals:

"The search for extraterrestrial intelligence is the search for a generally acceptable cosmic context for the human species. In the deepest sense the search for extraterrestrial intelligence is the search for ourselves." One could only find solace in the hope for a true brotherhood of life in a common universe which, according to Sagan, would cause animosities and differences on the small cosmic expanse called earth to wither in the

face of a total universal belonging.

After placing the cosmos within human reach both in physical and psychological terms, Sagan hurriedly attempts to reconcile his self-avowed scientific humanism with traditional western religious thought. In the first chapter of section four, "A Sunday Sermon," Sagan addresses the question of the existence of God. He recognizes the attempt to pinpoint the modern scientist into the admission of a Higher Being as an attempt to gain reassurance in a religious belief system in the face of the threatening autonomy of science. Sagan himself is an avowed agnostic, carrying a loose attachment to the God of Spinoza or Einstein, "revealed in the harmony of all beings." Taking this belief one step further, Sagan concludes that the question of an infinitely old universe or an infinitely old God is no real chicken-or-the-egg question at all: the two are most likely incorporated in the same idea. His most critical view of organized religion is that it must be responsive to even the most serious criticism of its dogma. Out of deference to both science and religion, his self-appointed task is to "challenge inadequate arguments for the existence of God." With regard to the question of God, however, Sagan diplomatically and eloquently reaches a middle ground encompassing both extremes of religious belief. If a traditional god does exist, then Sagan attributes him as the source of our intelligence and curiosity; out of homage to God for such gifts, man must use these gifts to explore his universe. If such a traditional god does not exist, Sagan concludes that these same qualities of curiosity and intelligence are tools self-developed for our very survival. "In either case, the enterprise of knowledge is consistent with both science and religion and is essential for the welfare of the human species."

Professor Sagan ends his collection of wandering essays with the highly speculative chapter "The Amniotic Universe." Rather than unifying the broad array of ideas earlier presented, Sagan chooses to conjure one last, grand speculation, the relationship between the childhood memory

retained from the perinatal period (a theory developed by Dr. Stanislov Grof) and the cosmological models of both science and religion. He suggests a possible link between the advocates of the Big Bang Theory and a perinatal memory of a violent and explosive birth. Originators of the Steady State Theory must then, he determines rather tongue-in-cheek, be born of Caesarean section. Sagan's sense of humor affords him a loose and open-minded objectivity not normally associated with the staid discipline of science. His sudden switch to an area of pure speculation seems at once to be contradictory to the method of science which he has nurtured throughout his work. In this chapter, however, we see the ultimate romance of a scientist with an idea, and the enthusiasm of an individual man for whom the world, through science, can be subdued.

John McNair

RAYMOND BRIDGE
Bike Touring: The Sierra
Club Guide to Outings
on Wheels 446 pp.
Sierra Club \$6.95

In Raymond Bridge's *Bike Touring*, the bicycle's recreational and transportation benefits are combined and explored. Bicycle touring is increasingly popular; freedom is often defined in terms of mobility, and bicycle touring provides a special type of mobility in which the rider can travel slowly enough to really see his surroundings and yet cover several miles. Bike touring, according to Bridge, refers to "any traveling by bicycle simply for the pleasure of riding the roads," and may range in length from short day trips to continental travel.

Bike Touring covers all the preliminaries for the actual bike tour. It takes a detailed look at the bicycle itself, at other touring equipment, at

bike repairs, at touring safety and the careful planning that necessarily precedes any bike tour.

The touring machine is commonly a derailleur-equipped, lightweight bicycle, called a ten-speed or racing bike. Quality, and therefore expense, vary greatly from bike to bike, although Bridge admits that any bicycle in working condition may be used. He discusses in detail the ideal bike for touring. General strength, personal fit, weight, and price are important qualities to consider when shopping for a touring bicycle.

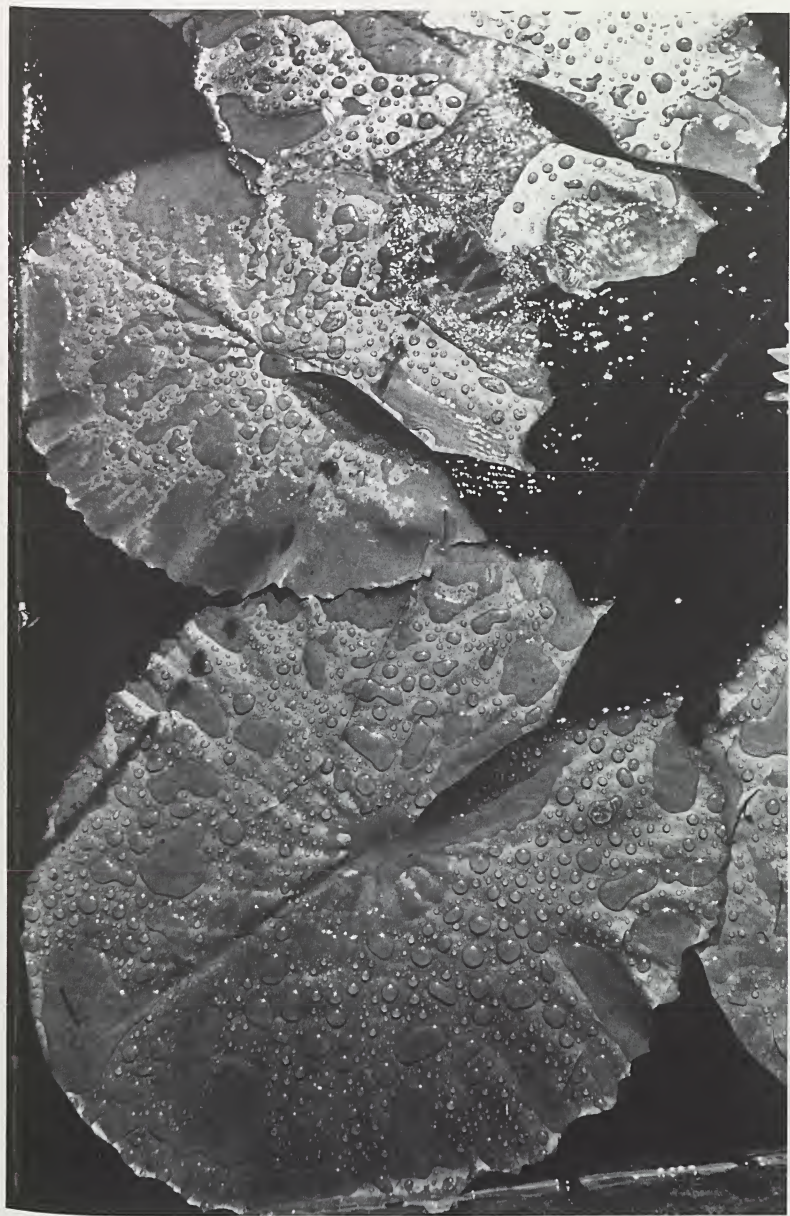
One should coordinate the appropriate equipment with the intended trip when planning a bike tour. Bridge stresses the importance of proper lights and reflectors, clothing, amount and distribution of luggage, and camping gear, and includes a checklist of essential touring items.

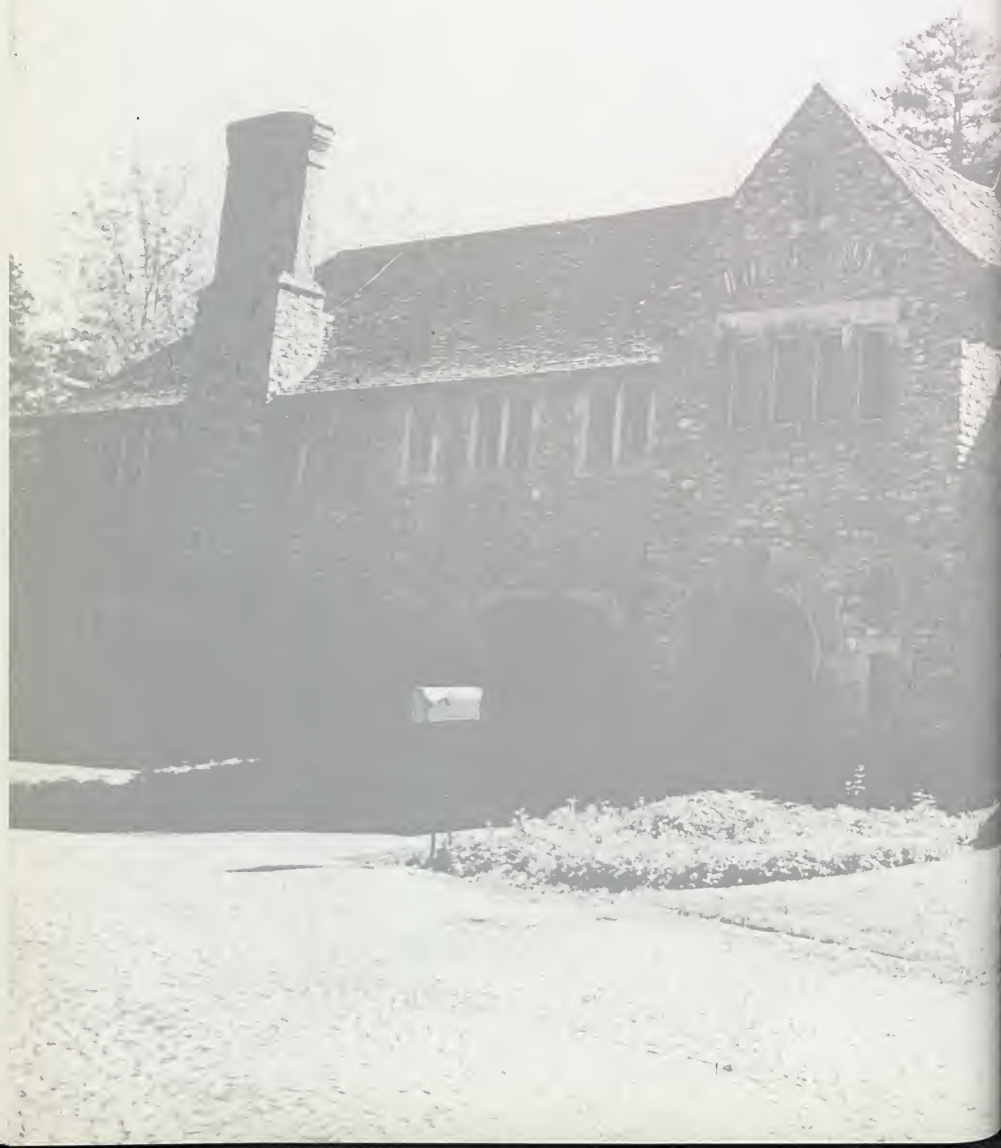
The rider's primary concern must be safety. Safe touring involves knowledge of weather, road, and traffic hazards as well as bike-repair technique. Although Bridge acknowledges that "a well-maintained bike is quite trouble-free, and the tool generally rides along for many tours without even being opened," he devotes an important part of his book to the reasons and methods for bike repair, decreasing the rider's dependence on the availability of a trained mechanic.

Care must be put into the planning of each bike tour, though "planning tours shouldn't be a chore." Taking the rider's physical condition into account, the route must be chosen and the length of the trip determined. *Bike Touring* thoughtfully examines the guidelines for making these and other decisions necessary for the desired trip.

Raymond Bridge speaks with humor and enthusiasm to both the beginning and advanced cyclist. *Bike Touring* is a thorough and well-organized guide, which can easily be understood by any rider who aspires to tour efficiently.

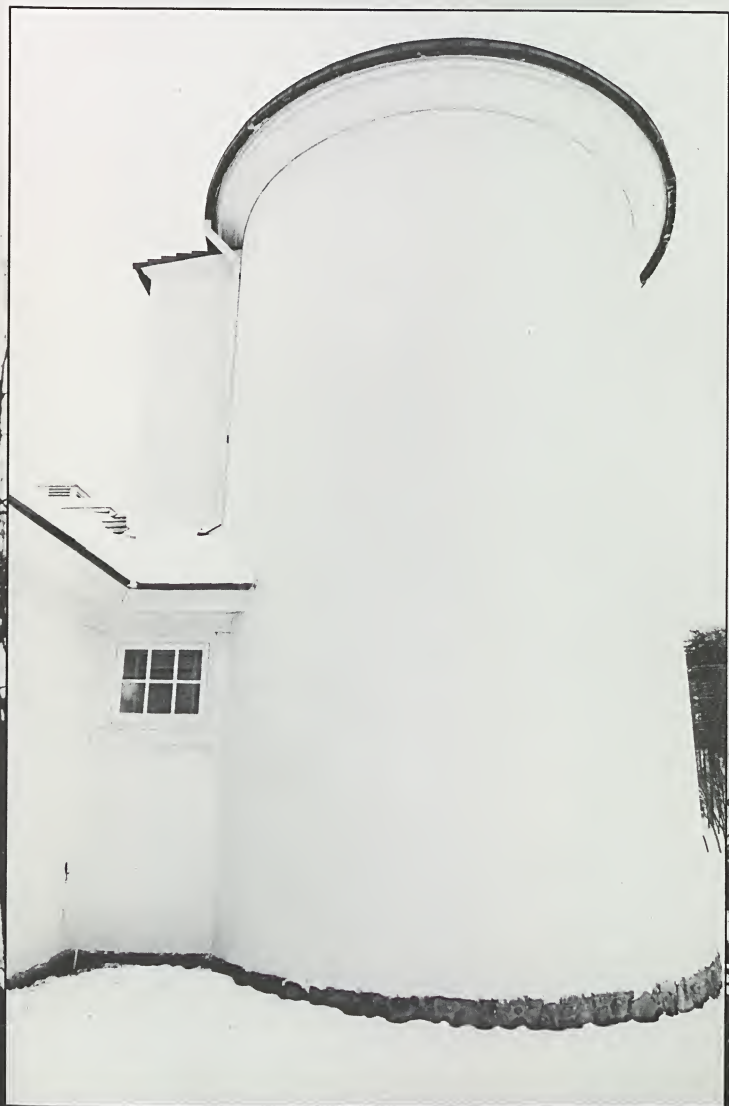
Alison B.





The Student

Winter 1979-'80





The Student

WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY • WINSTON-SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA • WINTER 1979



Sam Page

CO-EDITORS

Paula Dale
Robin Elaine Byrd

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Evelyn Byrd Tribble

ASSISTANT EDITORS

Edward Allen
Erin E. Campbell
James Gurley
Esther Hill

ART EDITOR

Julie Doub

STAFF

Janet Bynum
Eva Curlee
Lisa Ferguson
Catherine Frier
Elizabeth Hamrick
Leslie Kell
Tom Lewis
Alfonso McMillian
John McNair
Kenneth Pritchard
Mike Riley
Susan Rogers
Marty Rowden
Jackie Werth

PHOTO CREDITS

Cliff Britt p. 7, 10, 42, 43
Sam Page p. 1, 13, 17
Randy Stoltz p. 38

TABLE OF CONTENTS

©Copyright 1980 by The Student

All Rights Reserved

No part of this magazine may be reproduced in any form without permission.

Articles

The Curious Case of the Sherlockian Scholar
by Evelyn Byrd Tribble

Jim Moon's Art Defies All Labels—
Except Success
by Jenny Sharpe

Features

The 1979-'80 Student Literary Contest

Contest Table of Contents

Theater: Wake's Technical Toybox

We, Poor Figures
by Erin E. Campbell

Daguerreotype
by Brian Marshall

Interlude
by Edward Allen

Sweet is the Incense of Earth
by Michael Harford

brown eyes warm
by Janet Bynum

Bookcase

Philip Roth: The Ghost Writer
by Elisabeth Stephens

C. P. Snow: A Coat of Varnish
by Alex Perry

Kurt Vonnegut: Jailbird
by Tom Lewis

Hunter S. Thompson: The Great Shark Hunt
by C. Dale Neal

The Student is published three times per academic year by the students of Wake Forest University. Funds provided by the university. It is a non-profit organization existing by and for the Wake Forest community. Manuscripts and suggestions may be brought by our office in room 224, Reynolda Hall, mailed to Box 7247, Reynolda Station, Winston-Salem, N. C. 27109. Opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect those of the editors.

The Curious Case of The Sherlockian Scholar

—Evelyn Byrd Tribble

Everyone knows of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson. Even those who have never read a single story have at least seen Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce on the late show. There is less familiarity, however, with that very curious branch of literary criticism: "Sherlockian scholarship." A vast body of literature has been written about the 56 short stories and the four novels, in hopes of proving everything from the date of Holmes's birth to the interesting hypothesis that Watson was a woman.

This occupation began in earnest after the death of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. While Sir Arthur was alive, the tales enjoyed immense popularity; once it was clear that no further stories could be written, Sherlockians began to compose "the writings about The Writings." Ronald Knox is said to have "founded the Sherlockian school of higher criticism" in 1911 with his address at Oxford, "Studies in the Literature of Sherlock Holmes." In the thirties several works appeared in a similar vein, including T.S. Blakeney's *Sherlock Holmes: Fact or Fiction*, Harold Bell's *Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson: A Chronology of Their Adventures*, and that seminal work of Vincent Starrett, *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes*. Today such scholarship continues. Articles are published in the *Baker Street Journal* or the *Sherlock Holmes Journal*, two periodicals that appear irregularly.

It might be noted that these scholars are called "Sherlockian" or "Holme-

sian" rather than "Doyleian." There is an excellent reason for such distinction. In the criticism, Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson are treated as real people; Watson is said to have written the tales, and Doyle, if he is mentioned at all, is referred to as "the literary agent."

Lest this raise the question of the mental balance of Sherlockians, it should be pointed out that these are literary conventions. Commentators do realize that Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson, however real they may seem, are in fact the literary creations of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. They will not admit it for worlds, however, and this is where the fun comes in.

Since Watson is considered the author of the tales, and the tales are considered the records of actual events, critics cannot attribute inconsistencies in the stories to Doyle's occasional inattention to facts. Rather, they attempt to explain that *Watson* either had a lapse of memory or that he concealed the real truth, possibly for the sake of discretion. Fortunately for Sherlockians, Watson had many such moments of forgetfulness. These in large part provide the foundations for classical Sherlockian scholarship.

Sherlockians agree that Watson was at his worst when it came to chronology. Commentators have labored to construct a timetable for the events of the partnership, but such is the difficulty that no two can agree. The results of their endeavors are sometimes comical, more often tedious. William

S. Baring-Gould, in the *The Annotated Sherlock Holmes*, expends much energy in establishing the exact date of each of the adventures. Typical of his efforts is his commentary on "*The Resident Patient*," which Watson does not date. Watson remarks that "it rained hard this afternoon." Baring-Gould checks the meteorological data and reveals the following facts: "In October 1886, your editor's month and year for 'The Resident Patient,' the two rainiest days were the 12th, a Tuesday and therefore not the day, and the 15th, a Friday. The 15th would be acceptable except for Watson's earlier adjective 'close'—on Friday, the 15th of October 1886, the wind achieved a pressure of 16.5 pounds. The *third* rainiest day in October 1886, was Wednesday, October 6th—and the wind pressure on that day was only two pounds" (p. 273). This sort of data is repeated for each story in the hope of establishing the exact sequence of events in the lives of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson.

Apart from chronology, to my mind the least interesting of the problems surrounding the Canon, there are numerous other issues that scholars battle back and forth. Among these are the questions of Watson's wives, the exact location of the doctor's war wound, the fate of the bull pup, and what *really* happened during the Great Hiatus.

Dorothy L. Sayers once said that there was "a conspiracy afoot to provide Watson with as many wives as



Henry VIII." Watson mentions one wife, Mary Morstan of *The Sign of the Four*, by name. It is to her that he is married at the time of the Great Hiatus, when Holmes, apparently dead, disappears for three years. At Holmes's return, Watson mentions his "sad bereavement," which most commentators take to mean the death of Mary. After this time, however, he occasionally mentions a wife, though not by name. Most scholars believe that Watson remarried; some portray him as virtually a Bluebeard, positing anywhere from three to five wives for the man. This question is basically an offshoot of the chronological issue; the number of wives Watson had is dependent upon how one dates the stories.

The issue of Dr. Watson's wound is

a complex one that has fostered much argument. In *A Study in Scarlet* Watson distinctly states that he received a Jezail bullet in the shoulder while in Afghanistan. In *The Sign of the Four*, however, the bullet has mysteriously migrated to his leg. A number of theories have been concocted to explain this remarkable occurrence. Some scholars believe that he was wounded twice, once in the shoulder and once in the leg. Others believe that he was bending over, possibly attending a patient, in such a manner that the bullet passed through his leg into his shoulder. Still others would have that Watson was wounded in a location too embarrassing to mention. And there is a school of thought that maintains that Watson was not wounded at all: venereal disease made

it necessary for him to leave the Army. It is the small matters that delight Sherlockians; the little slips of the pen or the brain are most interesting to them. Nowhere is this more evident than in the infamous incident of the bull pup. In *A Study in Scarlet*, Watson states that "I keep a bull pup." The dog is never again mentioned; its fate has been hotly debated. The alternatives, each having its own set of proponents, are these: a) the pup bit Holmes and was evicted; b) Mrs. Hudson, the long-suffering landlady, drew the line at dogs; c) Watson tripped while carrying it upstairs and squashed the unfortunate animal; d) the dog did not like the Baker Street atmosphere and deserted; and e) "I keep a bull pup" was army slang for "I have a bad temper."

One of the greatest issues in Sherlockian scholarship has always been the Great Hiatus. We shall temporarily drop the convention of Watsonian authorship to discuss briefly the events surrounding this period.

In 1891, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle tired of the demands Sherlock Holmes made on his time, wrote "The Final Problem," in which Holmes is killed by his arch-rival Professor James Moriarty. That day Doyle wrote in his diary, "Killed Holmes." The reaction to the tragedy was overwhelming. Bankers in London wore black armbands to work. Doyle loudly ignored the protests until 1894 when he wrote "The Adventure of the Empty House," in which Holmes turns to explain that he was not killed but was travelling alone in disguise until the members of Moriarty's famous gang could be apprehended.

Naturally, this event was seminal for Sherlockian scholarship. There are any number of theories as to why "really" happened at Reichenbach Falls (the scene of the supposed death) and what Holmes was "really" doing during the three-year Hiatus. Anthony Boucher believed that Holmes actually died, and his cousin Sherrinford returned to London in 1894. Walter Armstrong, another critic, holds that Holmes was in London the whole time—"The Final Problem" was made up to trap Moriarty.

more interesting theory is that Moriarity was a woman, whom Holmes encountered at the Falls, married, and lived with for three years. The most far-fetched theorist argues that Holmes met the Abominable Snowwoman on the Himalayan Peaks. Another suggestion, recently made famous by *The Seven-Percent Solution* is that Holmes was actually on a rest cure for his addiction to cocaine. Moriarity was a figment of his diseased imagination.

By now it may be apparent that the only limits on this form of criticism are those of the imagination. *The World Bibliography of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson*, a work of 526 pages, lists articles on Sherlock Holmes under such topics as ancestry, birth date (a few critics prefer January 6. *Twelfth Night*, the only play that Holmes quotes twice, is January 6; his fondness for the play may be a result of that association), drug addiction (some say that Watson was the addict; others, that Holmes never actually took cocaine but was merely needling Watson),

eyesight, health (a dentist noted everything Holmes was recorded to have eaten and concluded that he suffered from acute pyorrhea), humor, income, limits of knowledge, personality, retirement, smoking and tobacco, travel, and women and offspring. This last category is most interesting. Rex Stout, the author of the famous Nero Wolfe detective stories, claimed that Watson was a woman in an article for the *Saturday Review of Literature*, entitled simply "Watson Was a Woman." There also has been much speculation about possible offspring, including the conjecture that Nero Wolfe was the illegitimate son of Holmes and Lizzie Borden.

The natural question at the end of this brief introduction to Sherlockian scholarship is "why?" Why all this concern over a popular literary creation? These writers are not adolescents frenziedly tacking Tolkien posters to their walls. They are highly educated men and women who are involved in a scholarly game that revolves around

the somehow powerful figures of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson. The source of the power of the two is something of a mystery. Many critics explain it in terms of the sense of security that Holmes's world invokes. This is the solid Victorian England, a world in which the villain is found out and justice, of one form or another, is proverbially triumphant.

There are probably other figures to whom such observations could apply. The bottom line is that Holmes and Watson are fun. To people who like to write, the serious game of Sherlockian scholarship is a great diversion, however incomprehensible it may be to those outside. As Christopher Morley said, "Never has so much been written by so many for so few."

Sources:

Baring-Gould, William. *The Annotated Sherlock Holmes*. New York: Clarkson N. Potter, 1967.

de Waal, Roland Burt. *The World Bibliography of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson*. Boston: New York Graphic Society, 1974.



Evelyn Tribble

DAGUERREOTYPE

the daguerreotype house
is bronze and sienna, broken
at the edges into cream white.
in front,

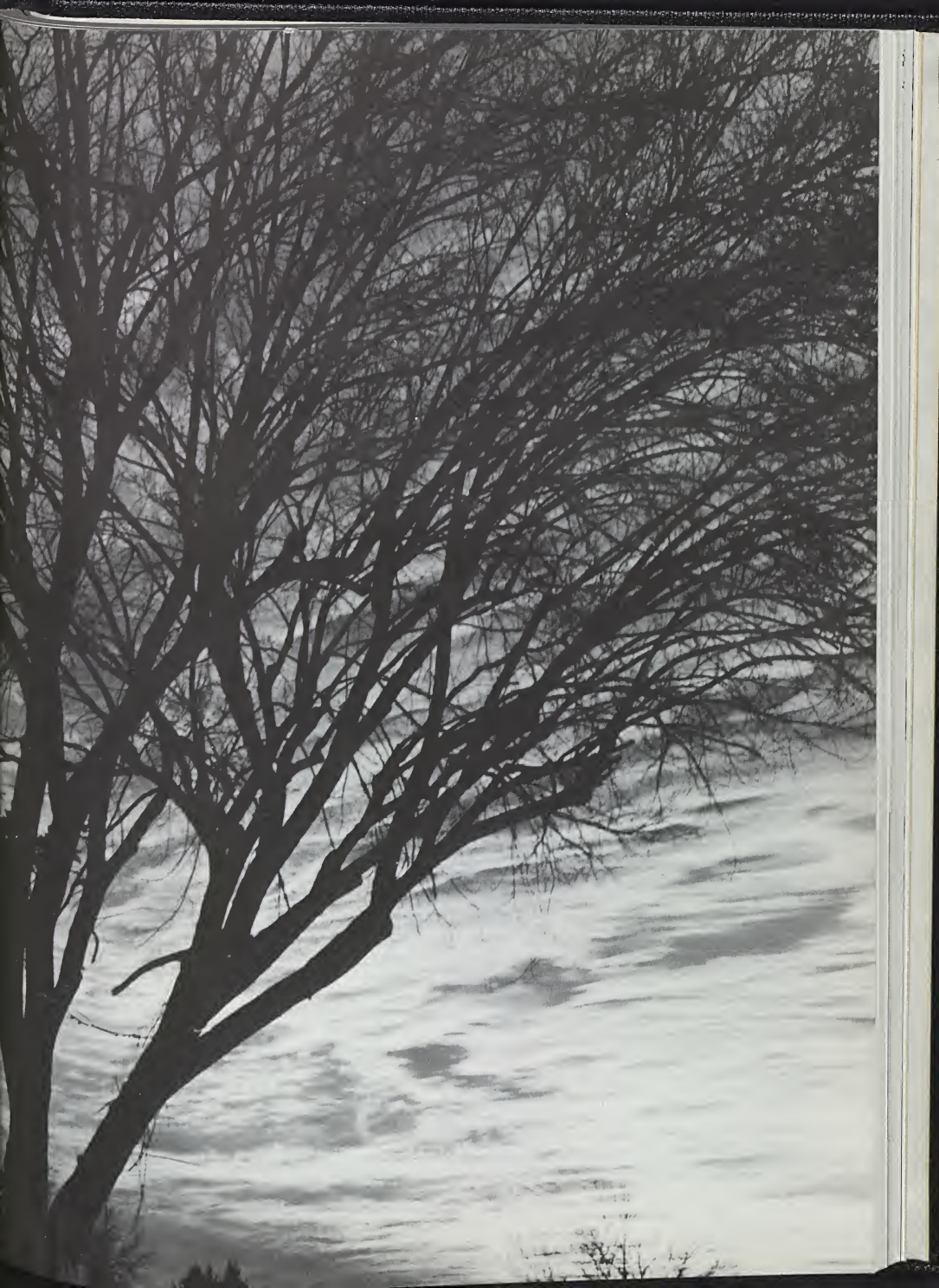
a man with an inadequate beard
stands still in his woolen suit,
small in the suit's dimensions.

I can feel his heat,
his chronic dustiness, the quiet
inside the coffee-colored, open smile,
that signals the pleasure of his woman, of
her starched embrace.

And I stand in the space he fills:
grasping his soft golden watch,
thinking of his wife's yellow dress
and of their laughing child
feeling his satisfaction — —

The peace of this
six day farmer, seven day lover
and man.

Brian Marshall



Interlude

Edward Allen

Bare feet scattered damp leaves as he wandered into the forest. Cool mist sprayed him; tiny rivulets of water fell from the whispering branches. Silence watched nearby. Pools of sunlight shimmered and fled at his approach. Young aspens bowed and straightened as he passed, and he trod on their fallen twigs, snapping them as his feet fell. He inhaled the newness of the forest, the scent of moist humus blanketing wriggling toes, and the fragrance of the fragile purple crocus. Ahead, a chickadee twittered and chirped the arrival of Youth. A joyous song thrilled his ears, and he halted, leaning against the silvery skin of a leafy column.

At the base of the pillar he knelt, gazing into the dark vastness of the forest. His eyes darted to the sudden brown flash of a scurrying chipmunk. Lofty branches rustled speech to their wooded brothers above his head — about him? Sharp sight pierced the arched dimness. Distantly, the inner woods beckoned to him. The faint sound of a rushing brook sent its chortling invitation.

Rising slowly, he walked past the middle-aged hickory and walnut sentinels. Knobbed brown bark arms did not hinder him. Budding bushes thrust their tangles at him, releasing clear droplets of dew in their brief contact. He followed a path centuries old, worn by countless animals. Leaves of an autumn past hinted at his passage until at last he chanced on a quiet pool mirroring the granite strength of a shadowing stone. Long wreaths of moss trailed into the shallow water. The renewing water dribbled forth from a small fissure in the stone, and the expanding circlets sent tiny minnows darting frantically. He learned their hiding places.

Stepping deeper into the maze of trailing vines, he continued toward the depths of the forest. A promise gnawed at his mind. Small greenish-white seedlings peeked out from their protective canopies. The maples quivered and warned him onward. Bob-whites interrogated the surrounding calm. The sun rose high in the sky above, glistering in the crowns of the trees, irregularly dark in the gaps between princely tops.

The onrushing conversation of the brook grew in volume. The muddy bank sloped to the base of the bridge — a giant tree, reaching for land, clinging stubbornly to its uprooted source. He crouched on the bank, pondered the myriad-legged insects swept to an unknown destination and the aimless swirling of swift waters around jutting stones.

On the opposite bank in a bend of the brook, a warren of raccoons, glancing around with bright eyes, poked a furry paw into the still-chilly water. Intent on its prize — gleaming silver trout — the young bandit paid little attention to him as he stepped on the trunk, carefully placing one foot after the other. He stopped in the middle and leaned on a splintered branch. He searched the limbo of water protected by the fallen tree, as eddying currents swept by the miniature lagoon. The antennae of a crayfish waved and quivered from the underside of a green stone as it slowly emerged. At the shadow of an overpassing leaf, it swiftly recoiled, to probe again seconds later. He reluctantly shook his gaze. Following the massive strength of the trunk, he inched his way toward the far bank. He gasped as his feet sank into the grasping mud. He pulled them free. The prints were already brimming with water.

Clambering up the bank, he was aware of a lidded watchfulness. Intruding into the calm of the forest, guarded feeling of strength and purpose reached into his mind. Here, the trees were spaced freely, unbunched, to accommodate their girths. Mammoth oaks and stately elms towered in ranks, their boughs shining in the sudden brightness above him. Heavily armored in overlapping rings of bark, the monarchs creaked with the breeze. Heavy solemnity overwhelmed him, yet he imagined the joy of life in the deep wells of their blood. Ancient, hoary veterans of the battles against lightning and wind-lashed rain, the patriarchs, benevolent in their power, admitted him. Craning his neck, he sought the hidden yellow spaces framing their interlocking limbs.

Escorted through the silent avenue of monuments, he spied three deer browsing at the protruding root of an elm, nibbling on the tender encircling shoots of ivy beginning to wind heavenward. A breath of mysteriousness assailed him, and the promise of a wonder yet unrevealed grew. He hurried. Startled, the deer — a proud, antlered buck and a doe licking her fawn, its eyes half-closed — tensed as he strode past, then watched his receding form puzzled. A mounting brightness welcomed him.

Then the trees ended. The oak and elm nodded slowly yet no breath of wind moved the air. Brilliant rays of sunlight lit the hidden glade. Atop a slowly rising knoll stood slender rowan tree, its shapely arms imploring Iris' grace. Pale white flower-clusters shed the sun's radiance, from precursors of coppery orange coronets, the berries

high summer. Choruses of melodious birdsongs wrung his heart as he stood marveling in the quiet reverence of the oaken druidic guardians. Bees hovered in the pink centers of the pure, fertile flowers, and the pervading gentle, sweet fragrance drifted lazily to him — whole-some, yet fleeting. A thrush fluttered near him and was gone. The chorus of nightingales' voices crescendoed, then finished. A green-gold silence reigned.

His wondering, awesome stupor waned hours later. Gazing about, he noticed the weakening sun. Skirting the glade in a still-awed distance from the youthful tree, he reached the outward opening where his path led. A rabbit stamped warning, echoing the somber virgil of the trees. Disturbed, he plunged into the closely set nest of pine trees, following the cone-littered trail. A pungent bitterness of seeping blood filled his nostrils. He placed his hand on a wounded tree, withdrawing a sappy brown stain.

Hesitant, he stalked onward, pausing only to feel the oppressive air and the touch of a chill wind. Fingers of withered firs scraped his arm. Stunted branches grasped and loosened as he hurried toward a mass of crawling weeds. Beyond, starkly illuminated against the strange blueness of the weeds, a great bare swath of scorched earth extended, damned by the gods. In the dusty soil he marked the masonry of a chimney destroyed long ago. The northern winds marshalled their cloud-soldiers for the final assault on the idyllic memory of the glade. The air reeked of poisonous smells, and in the gathering mist, his mind whirled and dimmed.

And he slept, dreaming a cold dawn in a slate-grey world with forests of chimneys trailing vines of smoke, blinding a world in steadily creeping black streams.

Sweet Is The Incense of Earth

Sweet is the incense of earth,
the fragrance of wild flowers
springing from the foot of the hilltop cemetery.
One thousand fathers walked my path.
One million mothers nursed my child-hunger.
This half moon night lights an ancient field,
shadows laughing half seen,
singing for children not born.
A man's sweat falls in the rows with seed
and corn grows gold-sweet.
Let my song join the shadows,
my mouth the half moon smile.

Michael Harford

The Student



*Winners of the 1979-'80
Literary Contests*

LITERARY CONTEST TABLE OF CONTENTS

First Place

story

Patmos
by G. Dale Neal 12

poems

Journey
by Esther Hill 18

In Need of Water
by Robin Byrd 18

Second Place

story

Icarian Flight
by Craig B. Wheaton 19

poems

Window
by Brian Marshall 26

A Work of Remembrance
by Jim Gurley 27

Third Place

story

Sad Song
by Stephen Amidon 28

poems

Slush and Stark
by Jackie Werth 33

Le Subjonctif N'existe Pas
by Evelyn Byrd Tribble 34

Honorable Mention

poem

Si J'avais Su...
by Fernando Pardo 38

Panel of Judges
Judges' Pen
Illustrations

35
36
28
28
15
19, 22, 25

The pounding on the door was barely audible above the storm that shook our Baker Street flat. When I opened the door, a frantic figure staggered into the room, exclaiming, "Mr. Holmes, you must help me. I'm at my wit's end."

"You're a magazine editor — literary magazine, I'd judge."

"But how did you know?"

"Elementary, my friend. The circles under the eyes, the jagged fingernails from climbing walls ..."

"It's about the magazine, Mr. Holmes. We're in dire straits. We need money — soon. What can we do?"

Holmes silently took out his pipe, lit it, and sat thoughtfully for nearly fifteen minutes. Finally, he said, "A marathon is your best solution. Get the public to sponsor you while you present a lengthy reading of some literature — something in good taste, of course."

The Sherlock Holmes Marathon is coming: 9 a.m. February 22 in Tribble Foyer.

Entries for the 1979-'80 Student Literary Contest delighted us with their variety and freshness. We would like to thank all those who submitted their work. Ten short stories and over fifty poems were judged; the results of the contest are here for you to enjoy.

PATMOS

"for Grey, who saw his way clear"

Holding in, then blowing out the Colombian smoke, he could see out over the waves.

The red moon's reflection bobbed on the water. The invisible line fed into the surf from his telescoping rod. (It swam in the still depths, closing its bubbly mouth on the briny white morsel. Moving away to join the feeding school, it did not feel the barb in its belly.)

The hit was communicated up the line to his light rod. Quickly, he began reeling it in. It felt big. He pulled and reeled, pulled and reeled. The joint dropped from his lips into the sand, but he was too busy. He closed his eyes and felt how big it was on the end of that line. A big one, the damndest big one this season. He moved closer to the surf for more play.

Surely it must be in by now. Yes, he could feel its scales dragging in the sand now, the gills flapping at the air now. He dropped the rod and followed the cutting of the line on his palm to his catch.

He nearly stuck his hand on the hook and the piece of the fish's lip. The fish was flopping its tail loudly in the surf. He dropped to his knees in the water, going after the sound.

"Bastard, oh you bastard!" he whispered.

He could not see. He grabbed for the sound of the splashing and fell face down in the cold salt water. A wave broke and he could hear no more sounds of the fish. He opened his eyes in the salt water and felt nothing. He rolled over in the surf.

"Bastard."

Later, he lay in bed, thinking how the smoke he exhaled swirled unseen in the darkness over his head. His wet clothes lay in a puddle at the end of the sandy rut worn every night from the surf over the last dune, across the busted boardwalk half covered with the winter's blowing of sand. Down the alley (knowing when to duck the wire clotheslines), across the road empty of traffic and sound, up the wooden steps, creak by creak to the second story. He had rented the room in the off-season, over a boarded souvenir shop with words painted in bright red: SUNGLASSES. TOWELS. SEASHELLS. CIGARETTES.

He did not turn on the lights when he came in. The lightbulbs had one by one burnt out and he did not bother to replace them. He knew the rut through the kitchenette, the bathroom, to the nightstand by the unmade bed. There lay the last joints to end the day.

The dope was supposedly good for glaucoma. Unfortunately, it was not glaucoma that was his problem. The dope just made the time go. He lay in bed, the white sheets cutting across his navel, and blew the Colombian smoke. Wondered why the sea grew louder each night. Thought about the things he could still see, not about the things he couldn't.

"Read the first line, please."

"E." Every second Monday, he took the bus to the mainland. Every second Monday, the ophthalmologist cracked the same jokes, did you hear, did you hear, as he strapped his patients into position, filtering his dull eyes through the machine that could change the bat into the 20-20 eagle.

G. Dale Neal

"Next line, please."

"Q eh Q...R...L..."

"Can you see this?"

"F...S...eh D..."

"Mr. Patmos, you're lying. You can't see that. Have you been memorizing the charts again?"

The machine rolled away from his eyes and Patmos blinked. The doctor shined a small flashlight into Patmos's eyes. The light danced along the blood vessels, and the pupils slowly dilated. The doctor peeped through the hole into the optic nerve plugged into his brain. Patmos thought, what if the doctor could see the image in the brain of himself peeking back through the keyhole? A strange mirror indeed.

"Okey-doke. Let's go back to the office."

Patmos rubbed his eyes as he followed the blur of the doctor down the fluorescent hall.

"Cigarette?" offered the doctor along with the seat.

"No thanks. Don't smoke. It gets in my eyes."

"Well," the doctor began, leaning back in his chair into a greater blur. "Your condition is not as good as we expected..." Patmos fingered the sunglasses in his coat pocket. He waited to put them on, to hide from the doctor. Early in the treatment, he remembered seeing the doctor roll his eyes as he talked about dead corneas, cones and rods confused about something as simple, as absolute, as night and day, about kinds in the optic nerves perhaps. A garden hose coiled in the basement all winter that convulses, like a dying snake, trying to force the first water through in the spring.

The doctor would take off his own glasses to look profound, Patmos recalled. He sucked on the earpiece to look thoughtful. Patmos knew the whole scene, how it looked even after he could no longer see it. He remembered everything, the eyechart, the doctor's glasses, the doctor's shingle hanging outside with the string of degree initials. Strangely, the blurred scenes became sharp, shuffling through memory to cut a bright new face card at the front of his mind.

Patmos even knew the doctor's spiel every second Monday. Your condition is bad. Progress is to be hoped for, yes of course, but we mustn't get our hopes up. What a shame it is to go spilling acid in your peepers as a lad. The outfitting of corrective lenses growing thicker each year until the world looked like the view through a fish tank or shot glass. But there could be a breakthrough in surgery any day now which you couldn't afford. Sad, sad, sad. The "in short, you are going blind."

"See you again next month."

"Thank you, doctor." And Patmos put the reflective sunglasses on, shrouding with a certain shame the rotting orbs in his head as he stepped outside.

Every day, Patmos donned his surplus army jacket and walked up the road through the boarded town and then back down the beach, to know if he could see everything he had seen the day before.

Up ahead was a small whitewashed blockhouse. The



Sam Page

windows had also been painted white, to stare blankly out at the street. Patmos could not make out the letters in the large sign over the white door anymore, but his memory read what his eyes could not. State Crafts Shop for the Blind.

Patmos smiled behind his sunglasses and thrust his fists deeper into the pockets of his jacket. Since he had moved down to the sea, he had lived on a Social Security check each month and the little dope he sold to acquaintances. He was not ready to start whittling on his fingers to make little ducks and gulls or epoxy his sleeve to the table to make seashell nativity scenes for the tourists. Not yet.

Ahead was the Bar, the sole site of his and most of the town's social life. A squat building, it had no sign or legend other than the old neon BEER. The place had formerly operated as a soft ice cream place with white tile and bright lights and red painted booths. They had busted out the lights and replaced the ice cream machine with a beer tap.

All the people Patmos knew frequented the Bar, that is,

all the people who would vaguely nod their heads when Patmos passed by, headed to the lone booth in the back.

"Hi."

"Yeah."

Patmos always made it a point to greet the barkeep. He looked around the dark corners of the room, still wearing the sunglasses. It was only three and there didn't appear to be anyone here.

"A Bud, please."

There was a blur on one table. Could be someone slumped over or a coat left from last night.

"You seen Joe round lately?" Patmos asked.

"Naw. Heard he went up to North Beach surfing for the weekend. Here's your brew."

The barkeep drifted out of Patmos's short field of vision, blurring into the shadows. Patmos took his beer and followed the instinctual rut to the last booth by the juke box.

He liked a seat close to the speakers. They had a good selection in the juke box. Since there were no radio stations to compete with the long static hum of the sea air, Patmos came down to the Bar for his music appreciation. Janis Joplin belting out "one more piece of your heart now babeey." Jagger and the Stones, "Honky-tonk Women" screaming through his brain. And he would give his heart, his all, stacking empty beer cans to one side, while he watched sixteen-year-old girls in bikini tops and jeans come in and go out to lay in the dark of the dunes.

Patmos and Joe would be there, always in the back, beer after beer, laughing about the sixteen-year-old girls getting laid. Then they would nod quietly to the music. "Can't you see, oh can't you see what that woman went and done to me."

Joe was all right. He never asked Patmos why he wore sunglasses at night. The kind of people Joe knew had their eyes receded into their skulls like moles years ago.

Patmos remembered one night they had bundled into Joe's land rover with two cases of beer and raced up the beach towards the point. Joe parked by the surf and slumped over the wheel. Patmos stepped out into the salt water lapping at the balloon tires. Joe fidgeted with the tape player.

"I can't hear it. Gotta blow the sea away, man."

Patmos lay out on the warm hood, while the engine made popping noises under his head. He recollected muttering about the meaning of things.

Joe got the speakers up to around 110 decibels. Hendrix's guitar wailing out over the electric waves. Joe giggled when the speaker blew cracking yellow and blue sparks into the sand.

"The blind getting blinder, man. The blind getting blinder."

Patmos lay silent on the hood, trying to recall what stars looked like.

The next morning, empty cans bobbed at the wheels and the tide was lapping over the seats. They had to get a wrecker to tow the land rover out of the surf.

Patmos finished his beer and his quarter's worth of songs in the juke box. It was not good that Joe was gone like this. Patmos's stash was running low. It didn't help his condition any, but it passed the time, a major consideration living in the off-season, watching the light of day roll away like a tide that will never come back.

He continued his circuit, walking back down the beach. The cold wind flapped the collar around his ears and drove his fists deeper into the army jacket. He did not glance at the constant roll of the waves. He knew what it looked like. He listened for the seagulls, keeping his eyes down in the sand he was kicking up.

Patmos used to walk, trying to squeeze every detail through his tired eyes. He would try to see the individual roll of each wave, trying to note where it rose out of the blurred background and slapped across the sky and ran into the foam of its predecessor.

But one day, the seagulls had disappeared. They had floated lazily against the sky the day before, and then one afternoon, they were gone. Patmos had craned his neck wildly in all directions, looking for them. There was nothing, no clue, but an occasional scream like a lingering ghost. He had brought bread crumbs to trap the screams, but the ghosts were too wily. There were the flap of wings and the screams, but Patmos never saw another gull.

The cold wind flapped around his neck. The sand felt into his tennis shoes. An eternity of waves waited in line to flare and extinguish themselves on the beach one by one by one. That was why he had chosen the beach, the predictability. He could memorize everything and see it over and over in his mind by the taste, the smell, the sound and the feel.

Here, no other stimuli blurred in the cornea, no green buds of spring, no riot of leaves to fall in the way, no snow to drift down, unique crystal by unique crystal, to obscure his mental surroundings.

Two seasons. Hot and cold. Somedays you went in surplus army jacket. Other days you smeared oil on your shoulders. You could tell if it was cloudy or sunny by the feel on your face. Rain you could always smell in the air when you woke up. A nice warning to put on your maternal galoshes.

Patmos walked in an instinctual rut between the dunes and the surf. He walked, remembering what to see, trying to put seagulls back in the landscape by their screams.

When it tapped him on the shoulder, he stopped. He thudded against the padded back of his jacket, then fell with a hiss in the sand. A small voice yelled in the wind behind him.

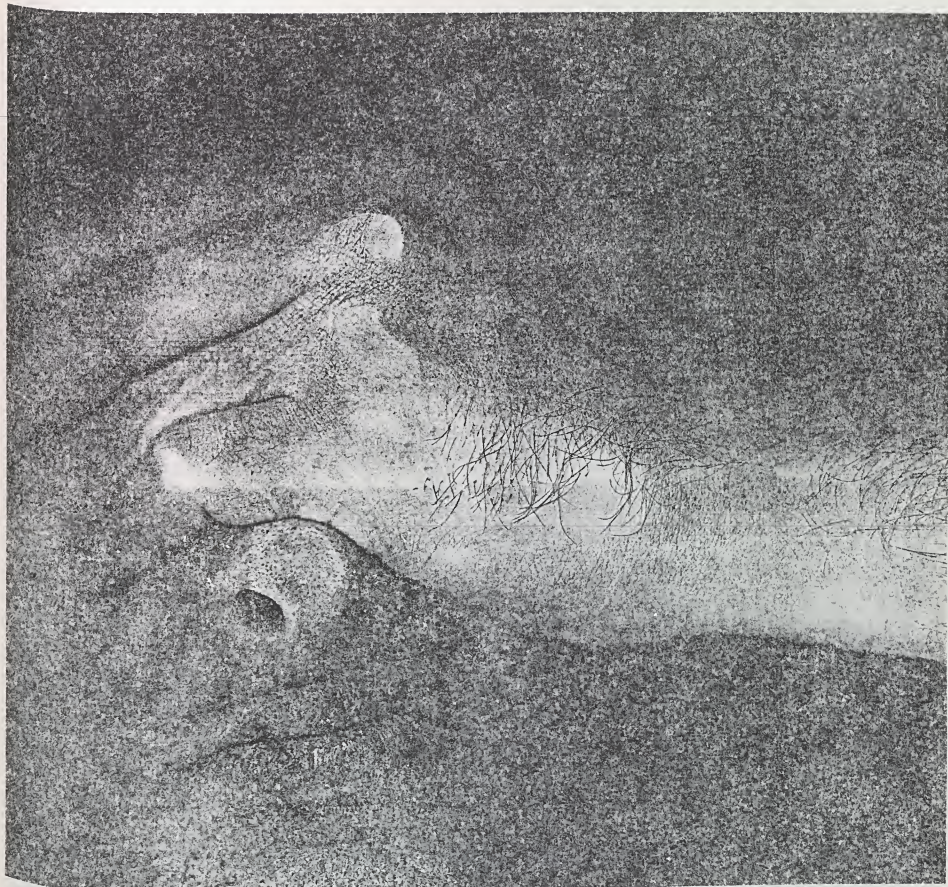
"Hey mister!"

Patmos turned his head slowly to the right. He could see nothing in the warped corner of his twisting eye.

"Hey mister, throw us our Frisbee!"

Patmos was afraid. He could not move his head and his eye twitched. It might be another ghost, another bodiless voice to haunt the landscape he was trying so hard to remember seeing. The voice came again.

"Hey mister! Hey, our Frisbee!"



Taylor Dancy

He stumbled away from the red plastic disc at his heels and from the perplexed cries of the little boy and his friend.

There was a letter in his mailbox when he came back from his stroll. Patmos hated mail.

He went upstairs and inside, and got his glasses and magnifying glass from a drawer. He found a lamp with a functional lightbulb, plugged it in by the desk. He sat down and opened the letter.

Bending over with his face pressing through the thick glasses and the magnifying piece to the page flat on the desk top, he could make out the painfully small, insecure handwriting.

Dear John...

Patmos sat up, took off the glasses and rubbed his eyes. They were tired already. Patmos hated reading. It was just a letter from his ex, anyhow.

He had memorized all her future letters by her past ones. I am doing real fine and I hope you're the same, I mean your eyes don't hurt, do they, and you ought to call sometime because I know you don't like to read and I remember how you used to yell at me because my writing was so small, what did you call it, something like the handiwork of a spastic ant. I'm fine and hope you're okay with your eyes. I'd like living at the beach, and my friend Mike is real nice to me and everything, but I haven't seen him in two weeks and I think he's gone. My waitress job's fine but the boss don't like me and he fired a girl last week so I want to quit and go to beauty school and learn to do people's hair. I need some money and I love you so much, John, I'm sorry things didn't work out for us.

And the ending. He could always see the ending. Love, Janet. XXX.

Patmos hated reading letters from his ex. He put his glasses on, looking in the letter for how much she was

begging for this time. His eyes hurt.

He reached into a drawer and pulled out a shoe box cover. Time to bathe the blinkers in some gold smoke. He folded Janet's letter and began moving the pot across the cover, the thick gold buds to one side, the fluffy cut from the leaf, seeds and stems to a corner and the ground dark powder to the middle. Cleaning his dope became his hobby, the only reason for wearing the painful glasses, to relieve his eyes with the smoke that set his mind in buzz and gave a new vantage to his blurred vision.

Like a miser, he combed through the pot, raking up little mountains of gold leaf, and moving them across the cardboard. He would have played all night in the stuff if he had not seen himself in the mirror across the room.

Patmos did not see the reflection, only the blur, but his mind suddenly provided the image. A face, his own which he had not seen clearly in years, bent over to drool on a stupid shoe box cover night after night. And the eyes, distorted through the heavy ground glass, popped out cross-eyed like crawling blind things pressing their pale bodies against the steaming window of a cage.

He knew his face to be not unhandsome, except for his eyes always twisting away under the eyelids. He had to carry the ugly bastards around in his face. They made him look ugly but also made others ugly, twisting their faces into fuzzy splotches of red flesh mumbling at him on the street. His eyes made him ugly. He knew men looked into the windows of his soul and found them boarded up and jagged with broken glass while his mind lived locked up in his skull, gnawing on bitter drugs like a misshapen monster. They all stayed away lest they see their deformed reflections in the ugly mirror he carried in his face. They all could tell by the way his head turned stiffly. They all knew and pitied.

"Goddam them!" Patmos screamed; ripping the glasses off, raking into a cornea with a grimy fingernail. He hurled the glasses at the mirror, breaking the terrible image of his maggot eyes. The glasses cracked against the wall and fell behind the dresser under the mirror. The shoe box lid with two ounces of Colombia Gold sailed off the table and scattered into the dirty carpet.

"Maggots! Maggots!" Patmos screamed in the second story room by the sea, grinding at his eyes with his fists. He sobbed, but he did not know the wetness was not bitter tears from his dead eyes, but the flow of optic fluids from his wound.

Patmos was on his hands and knees, trying to pick the pot out of the carpet, when the phone rang.

"Hello."

"John...it's me. Janet."

"Hi Janet."

A long pause with nothing but the steady hum through the power lines, running through the night.

"Well, how is every little thing? Is the weather okay down there?"

"Okay."

"Catching any fish?"

"Not lately."

Expectant echoes dying in the thin dark tunnel, two people yelling at either end.

"Look John, did you get my letter, I mean, I hate to bother you, but see, I could really use some money. Things been bad since Mike left and I quit my job and remember that beauty school I wanted to go to so I could learn to do people's hair? Well, that burned down the other day and..."

"Janet."

"John, could you send me something, I mean just a little more this month. And about last month, John..."

"I couldn't find my checkbook."

"Oh...oh I am sorry. Your eyes."

"Just a figure of speech, Janet."

"John, please just send me the money like I said in the letter."

"How much?"

"Didn't you read my letter, John? I thought..."

"Janet, listen to me for a change. I broke my glasses and I think my left eyeball is bleeding. I can't see, but I am not blind to people using me. You used me when we were married and you use me now. Just like the way you leech off some guy by crawling into his bed and sucking him dry. The only good thing is soon I will never be able to see you again."

Patmos hung up before she could break down and start screaming you bastard you bastard you bastard into the receiver. She was that kind of bitch, and he had seen her before he married her.

In the end, there was nothing to do but walk the beach and wait. The dope was still in the carpet. His rod rested in a corner of the room, the line fouled. He did not take the time to unsnarl it.

The ophthalmologist had cleaned the scratched eye. He warned Patmos the chance of infection was still great and the deterioration would be quicker now.

Joe had gotten busted at North Beach with a bale of dope that had washed ashore stashed in the back of his land rover under a tarp.

Patmos had relented and sent most of the month's Social Security check to Janet. It got her off his back at least. Besides, he still remembered the pretty way she closed her eyes when they had made love.

It was January and no kids tossed Frisbees on the beach or sixteen-year-old girls lay in the dark of the dunes. The screams of the gulls were silenced in the steady hiss of the nor'easter that you couldn't see but simply turned your collar up as you walked five miles up the beach, five miles back down every day.

Nothing to do but walk and wait. Patmos knew that on day the sun would not rise for him. But he would have to get out of bed anyway.

Patmos walked and thought about the lightless days to come. He did not wear the sunglasses now since there was nobody on the beach to hide his eyes from. He walked and listened to the cold nor'easter and dug his hands

deeper into the pockets of his surplus army jacket.

Then he found the roach, the burnt butt of an old joint deep in the corner of one pocket. It had been weeks since he had last lit up, since the buzz smoke crawled through his brain. Patmos stopped and fumbled with an old crumpled pack of matches, turning his back to the wind and hunching over the bit of dope in his cold fingers.

The match scraped along the rough strip on the pack and went off. The flawed jelly of one eyeball exploded in a spasm of pain. Oh God flew out of his lungs in a hiss, forced out by the incredible hurt. Patmos held his face in both hands, bending over the sand. He felt sick. The exploding pain in his eye burned into his brain like napalm.

"Oh god god god god god," he panted, blinking his eyes. He opened them and saw the ocean burning white, great white waves rising and growling like beasts out of

the sea to claw at the land. The pain was unbelievable. He looked and saw the lines of the wind cutting like Damascus steel through the cold air. He looked and saw white wings cart-wheeling through the white air. He looked and saw white grains of sand blowing across his feet. Clouds smoked the far horizon, white on white. The whole expanse of sea and sky and sand burned with a white pain, blackening his brain. Amazed, Patmos looked at the January sun and saw a great black hole in the white world.

The white burned away into the pit of the sun. The pain deadened into a black soreness at the root of his eyes. Exhausted, Patmos fell in the sand, grinding sharp sand into his dead eyes.

Patmos lay on the beach a long time. Over and over he said to himself, "How strange the world looks when you are blind. How strange."



Sam Page

In Need of Water

It's just you and me and the dying poinsettia
the molasses man next door gave you
Last Christmas
You thanked him and told yourself you'd care for it
and see if it just wouldn't bloom for
next Christmas.
The poinsettia sits here
dying
You read your newspaper.

Robin Byrd

Journey

The woman rocks
a journey on porch boards
moaning with the weight
of age
anchored by nails going to rust
stains on splintered wood.
Her legs, a maze not map
of broken veins,
push back, flex forward
yet back in slow consolation
lap empty, she rocks
only her dead child self.

Esther Hill



Icarian — Flight

Craig B. Wheaton

Last May, my girlfriend, Debbie Miller, and I broke up. Don't worry, I'm not going to bore you with a story of romance. Who believes in romance these days anyway? In fact, even though Debbie and I dated steadily for just a month short of four years, I haven't thought of her all that much since then. I have thought of her father quite a bit though, or rather I haven't been able to get him out of my mind. I loved Debbie and hated her father, yet it is his hatred aren't really the same thing at bottom. Each in its utmost development supposes an intense degree of intimacy. The real paradox is that love may conceal a destructive impulse and lead to ill, while hatred may be a kind of love and ultimately lead to good.

Right from when Debbie and I started going out, I knew I would eventually have to contend with her father. In her eyes there was no more perfect man than her father. Robert Redford would have even waned in comparison. Debbie talked about him so often and in such a fond way, that I almost began to think of him as a rival. But what chance to have against a rival who doesn't even know he is in competition with you? Debbie even caused a tremendous amount of damage in her innocence of the competition. She always seemed to bring her father into our conversations. It wasn't the times he was the main subject that bothered me, so much as the times she managed to weave him into a conversation when I least expected his presence.

I remember one warm summer evening when Debbie and I were sitting on some large rocks by the James River. The full August moon reflected off the water, and the night had a gentle quietness to it you could almost smell. All I could think of was Debbie.

"Debbie," I said, "I love the way you cuddle up to me."

"You do," she said in her gentle drawl which made a simple statement sound like a question. "It does feel so nice to be close to you, Jeff. I remember when I was little and my father would lie down, I would cuddle in the bend of his legs. I called it my squirrel's nest."

It didn't seem to matter what we were doing, Mr. Miller never seemed far from Debbie's mind. I sometimes wondered if I was only a substitute for him. I was Debbie's physical lover, but I couldn't help but think it was her father who seduced her for me.

I'll never forget the first time I met Mr. Miller. I had only taken Debbie out a few times, but from the way she had talked about her father, I figured he must be something special. Funny thing is, I don't remember that first meeting from what happened, but for what didn't happen. It was either a Friday or Saturday night in early June, and I had come to pick Debbie up and take her to see "Lolita" at the drive-in movie at Southside Plaza. Debbie answered the door and told me to come into the den and meet her father. She was all excited since she had been telling me that I'd like him "bunches" right off the bat, and she was eager to see my reaction to him. Mr.

Miller was talking on his CB when I first saw him. He was the only person I knew who had a "base station" in his house. I waited a few seconds for him to sign-off, and then he stood up to meet me. Debbie introduced us, we shook hands... and nothing. I expected to see some kind of greatness in Mr. Miller, or at least a lot of character... but nothing. He didn't even look the part. It was like someone had cast a Southern redneck to play King Arthur. Mr. Miller was about 5'8" tall, while I stood close to 6'4", so I couldn't very well look up to him, or even stare him in the eye. Debbie was even taller than he was. He was definitely middle-aged, even past the stage where it would have done him any good to try to hide it. He was balding and slightly roly-poly. No, roly-poly is not a good word to describe him, it's too light and musical. There was nothing about him that fit my expectations. I mean he didn't even talk like he was supposed to. It was like the first time I saw my favorite comic-strip characters, the Peanut gang, in an animated T.V. special. When I heard Charlie Brown's voice it just didn't sound right. It didn't agree with the voice I had imagined for him. I was sure Mr. Miller would sound pleasant and knowledgeable. Instead his voice sounded like it rightly belonged to a South Carolina redneck. I thought maybe there had been a mix-up, and there was a farmer in Lisbon, South Carolina, who sounded like Mr. Miller should have.

After I had met Debbie's father, her worship of him seemed out of place, almost unhealthy. I remembered reading about an Oedipus complex in psychology class, and for awhile thought that might explain everything. The only problem was that I soon found out Debbie's two brothers held their father in the same high regard. I was at a total loss as to why his children held him in such esteem. I could have understood if he were a rock star or a sports hero. It seemed the only thing at all outstanding about Mr. Miller was his passionate love for flying. I guess having a real passion for anything is rare. In a world where it's hard to interpret one's circumstances, just defining one's desires is a noble deed. Maybe there was some kind of nobility in his blood. You never know who some great English monarch may have had an affair with. Mr. Miller could easily have the blood of a noble bastard from somewhere along the line.

Mr. Miller had been flying since he was fourteen years old. He was too young to have a license, but little matters like that never got in his way. Mr. Miller would even tell stories about the lengths he would go to so he could fly. He said he even used to shovel snow off the runway in the winter. I never bothered to ask him how much snow they got in a usual South Carolina winter. But then again, you can't question the facts in a story about Davy Crockett.

As Debbie and I continued dating, I picked up a fairly good knowledge of Mr. Miller's history. At first this information was presented mainly in the form of anecdotes which Debbie told me in private. Later I found out that Debbie had acquired this habit, along with most of the stories, from her father. When I started to eat dinner frequently over at the Millers' house, my parents were

moving from Richmond to Connecticut. When they left me by myself, I could expect to be entertained by Mr. Miller with tales of his life. It was almost like he thought of himself as a modern-day Davy Crockett or Daniel Boone. His tales ranged all the way from his boyhood to what happened to him that very day. He hardly ever got into a conversation, he just related anecdotes.

Mr. Miller's boyhood name was Ashby. I'm sure he still uses the name Ashby, but to me he will always be "mister". From his stories, it seemed like his parents had planned his whole life for him. They sent him to military school in the sixth grade, where he stayed until he graduated. Right after his graduation from Sumpter Military Academy, Ashby went to work for his father. He was expected someday to take over the reins of the family business, a construction company.

I think that Ashby Miller always felt deprived of the chance to go to college to make his own way in the world. He always talked about how successful he could have been. "Just like Ben Franklin," he would say. Oh, how Mr. Miller loved Ben. He would frequently quote from *Poor Richard's Almanac* to his sons. Yet sometimes he felt trapped by the neat moral enclosure of *Poor Richard*. At one time the family business promised to make him a wealthy man, but some bad breaks had caused it to go bankrupt, and Ashby was left to fare for himself. It was many years before he ended up in Richmond as the Supervisor of Maintenance for First and Merchants Bank. The problem was that he was far from wealthy, and yet he believed in the premise that those who are poor deserve to be poor, and those who are rich are better people. Maybe that's why he was always coming up with one money-making scheme after another. He wanted to make the fortune that was rightly his. However, he never did anything about these schemes. He was too settled and too far advanced in life ever to leave the conservative road. Middle-aged men just don't drop everything in life to follow a dream, and besides, Mr. Miller was much more practical than romantic.

Mr. Miller would never admit that he was in any way failure. He even tried to make Sumpter Military Academy appear like a college. I'm not sure whether he did it to impress his children, or fool himself. Over the color T.V. set in the Millers' den was a picture of Ashby graduating class all decked out in their dress uniforms. The only time I ever saw a Mr. Miller I could understand was in that picture. If we were competing over Debbie how I would have loved to face him as soldier to soldier. Dressed in a uniform, he was identifiable. One could face him as an enemy, without him being able to hide under a mask. Maybe soldiers wear uniforms in wars, not so they know who to kill, but so they can kill.

Over the black vinyl sofa in the same room hung Ashby's sword and sheath criss-crossed over one another. They probably wouldn't have looked that bad in some kind of setting, but they were just balanced on small nails. What Ashby was most proud of was the fact that Tremble, a substitute anchorman on Channel 12 News,

graduated in the same class, and "isn't it sumthin' how many successful men graduated from Sumpter."

I think the reason I started hating Mr. Miller was Mrs. Miller. I was surprised when I learned that Ashby had known his future wife when he was a boy growing up in South Carolina. She never appeared in any of his anecdotes that dealt with that period of his life. In fact, the only story she ever appeared in was when she got injured when Ashby totaled the Cadillac his father had just purchased. But then again, there aren't many stories about Mrs. Crockett.

Even though Mr. Miller was not wealthy, he still owned his own plane, a Cessna, and flew it every chance he got. He seemed to spend more time with his plane than his family. I felt especially sorry for Mrs. Miller. It did no good to talk to Debbie about it.

"Debbie, it seems like your father is either at work or flying his plane."

"But Jeff, you know how he loves to fly."

"Yea, yea, I know, but don't you think he should spend more time with his family?"

"No! It would be selfish to think like that. Besides, he's no worse than those fathers who play golf all weekend. And on top of that, he has so much to put up with at work everyday that I'm glad he has something he can get some pleasure from."

"What about your mother?"

"Jeff, you're perverted to talk like that."

"But Debbie..."

"Drop it! I don't want to talk about it. My father loves my mother and that's that."

Oh yes, I haven't told you about all that Mr. Miller had to put up with at work. It seemed like everyone was out to cause him trouble. His superiors were "a pain in the ass" because "they damn well know I'm smarter than they are, and it makes 'em scared of me." The people who worked for him caused just as much trouble because "they want me to look bad so they can steal my job... they try to get away with doing as little work as possible... and then there's them damn niggers I can't fire, 'cause they'll cause a big stink, and we have to keep 'em on to keep the government off our backs."

It was a rare day when Mr. Miller didn't come home with some story about some injustice he suffered at work. If he didn't have a good story from work, he would throw in a proven winner, which was usually a story about his flying escapades. There wasn't a single flying story I heard fewer than three times. His children always seemed just as happy to hear an old story as a new one. Only Mrs. Miller ever appeared less than eager to hear one of his stories. She never voiced her opposition, but you could tell the way she felt. She would occupy herself with some menial task and appear to ignore her husband. If that was the case, then he would merely direct his story at his sons.

"All right," Mr. Miller would start, "y'all listen at me. Did I ever tell of the time I buzzed some niggers?"

"Yea," one of his sons would say, "but it's such a good

story and Jeff hasn't heard it yet. Tell it to Jeff."

I always wished that one time I would say that yes I have heard your damn story and I don't want to hear it again. Instead, I would just sit there with a nickel-plated smile pasted on my face. I would always tell myself I was only being polite for Debbie's sake.

"Ya see now," he would continue, "I was flyin' over this field in Gouchland County, not very far from where we go shootin' sometimes, and I see all these niggers workin' in a field, so I decide right there to have me a little fun."

All through his story his family, except for Mrs. Miller, would stare at their father, smile and nod their heads. At first I would feel embarrassed to witness such a show, but after awhile I got used to it. It was like you couldn't help but get involved. Mr. Miller was definitely a good story teller. He reminded me of a preacher at a religious revival. The thing that bothered me most was even though I didn't like what he was saying, I listened.

"Well, them niggers noticed me purty damn quick, figuring I was flyin' right low. They all just dropped what they were doing and stood there watchin' me and wondering what in God's name I was up to. Well I decided to teach them niggers a lesson, ya know for the way they always drop their work at the slightest excuse. Hell, if their cousin twice removed died they'd want the day off. And the way they're all related, they'd be off half the year. Well, I circled 'em a few times real tight, and then lit out for a long approach. As I come at 'em, I'm lower than the trees, and you should've seen their faces. I never seen so many stupid grins disappear so quickly. I swear they were all 'bout as close to being white as they'll ever git. They were so damned spooked they hit the dirt, and would have buried themselves a few feet under if they could've. I never will forget it. I can't never recollect laughin' so hard."

His children took the cue, and laughed as hard as they could. My being silent would have seemed so anti-social that I allowed myself a light laugh.

After dinner, the Miller family would retire to the den for an evening of television. Mr. Miller would recline on the black vinyl sofa where he commanded absolute rule over the T.V. set, by his possession of the remote-control unit. He was very fond of watching detective shows like Kojak or Columbo, especially if he had seen them before. I'm not sure whether he liked to watch re-runs because he knew what was going to happen, or because he could tell everyone else what was going to happen. As far as sports on T.V., he loved to watch auto racing, and he would tell stories about how he had actually met some of the greats at Charlotte Motor Speedway. I loved to watch basketball games, but never got to watch a game if Mr. Miller was in the room because "who wants to see a bunch of niggers runnin' up an' down a floor anyway."

I never could get Debbie to see any of her father's faults. Maybe it was because she thought I was just jealous of him.

"Debbie," I would ask, "how come your father has such prejudices against blacks?"

"You just don't understand him, Jeff. He's just kiddin' around."

"Well, even so, don't you think he's setting a bad example for your brothers?"

"Not at all, dear. We all know Dad doesn't mean what he says about niggers."

One day Debbie told me that her father had come up with the idea that he could make a fortune skywriting. I was pretty skeptical, but Mr. Miller seemed to be taking the idea pretty seriously. I couldn't quite believe it when I found out he had purchased a plane with which he could skywrite. The plane was way out in Quixote, California, but he was going out to fly it back home as soon as he got time off from work.

He finally got a week off in June, this was about two years ago, to go get the Stearman, or "The Spirit of St. Ben," as he had already christened it. When he reached California, he called home to say the plane was the most beautiful thing he had seen in his whole life. He said it was a vintage World War I, single-prop, open-cockpit model that had been used in quite a few movies.

The trip back to Virginia took three days more than he had planned. For one thing, Mr. Miller had never flown a Stearman before. From what I understand it is one of the hardest planes to fly because of how heavily a pilot must rely on his senses. These senses are not those as we think of them. For instance, one thing that makes flying a Stearman so difficult is that the only way you can see below you is to hang out the cockpit. You can only look forward, backward, and up, so that the ground can not be used as a reference. Mr. Miller did not ask for any instruction, he was too proud. He took the plane up relying on his instincts. I think it's something similar to how Mark Twain said riverboat pilots have to rely on their senses while navigating the Mississippi. No matter what I thought of Ashby Miller, I couldn't help but admire his flying ability.

Despite all his ability, Mr. Miller had more than a few problems on his trip across America. A Stearman is quite a powerful plane, but it isn't built for long-distance travel. It's like driving a tractor on the interstate.

Two days into his trip, when he was landing the plane in the hard desert winds of Arizona, he ground-looped the plane, causing a fair amount of damage. Unfortunately there was no way he could get parts for the Stearman for quite some time. He knew he could be stuck there for weeks, so he decided to complete the journey with the plane in its crippled state. I couldn't make up my mind whether Mr. Miller was brave or stupid, but there was something romantic in his attempt. Maybe he did have some noble blood in him.

Mr. Miller's whole family was worried about him getting home safely. That's one thing about Mr. Miller, if there was any danger or sacrifice involved in what he did, and he was in a great deal of danger now, he did not fail to make sure his family knew everything that might happen to him. Debbie always worried about him, and this time she was sure something bad was going to happen to him. I

tried to comfort her, or at least get her to take her mind off her father, but it was no use. Debbie confessed to having nightmares about her father crashing. I knew it must be a terrible feeling to live with, one that is always on the edge of the mind. I'm sure that Mrs. Miller lived with the same kind of fear. It almost seemed satanic that it was Mr. Miller who so often pushed this fear into the foreground of his family's mind. He talked of his close calls in a voice that could do nothing but probe at the already over-sensitive minds of Debbie and her mother. Yet it was this same voice which filled his boys' eyes with awe and admiration.

Needless to say, Mr. Miller made it safely home from California. If there is one thing he possessed, it was a charmed life, and I think he found pleasure in testing how powerful the charm was. After he got the plane to Richmond, it took him almost a month to get it repaired. During that month he and his family sanded the whole frame of the plane so it could receive a new paint job. I never saw Debbie on a weekend for that whole month, because she spent all day at the airport sanding, it tired her out so much she had to go to bed when she finally got home.

I can remember the long discussions about what color to paint "The Spirit of St. Ben." They finally decided on silver and grey, the color that Stearmans were painted during their Air Force days. That is they decided on silver and grey before Mr. Miller swung a deal with 7Up to paint the plane for him. He was able to make the deal since he already had a contract with 7Up to skywrite for them. He didn't even know how to skywrite, and he had already committed himself by signing a contract. It took almost three weeks for the men 7Up hired to finish painting the Stearman. I couldn't believe what the finished product looked like. There in front of me was a giant flying bottle of 7Up, complete with a lime green fuselage, lemon-yellow wings, and an orange propeller for a bottle cap. I knew it was a bad sign when I saw that Mr. Miller was pleased with the finished product. He even hired a professional photographer to take pictures of "The Spirit of St. Ben," which he hung on either side of his Sumpter Military Academy graduating picture.

Mr. Miller made his first attempt to skywrite, but ran into an unexpected problem. He found out that any commercial oil he used didn't create a smoke that was suitable for skywriting. That is, the smoke wasn't visible enough and didn't last long enough before dissipating. He then discovered the formula for the special oil he needed was a well-guarded secret among the few remaining skywriters. He was forced to resort to laborious experimentation to discover the formula. It took a long time, but he finally found success by using a very heavy oil he had gotten from work. But that oil produced a harmful amount of pollution and could only be obtained by acquiring a special permit. Mr. Miller's request for a permit was denied, but he was not about to give up so easily. He decided there was no need for anyone to know he was using that specific kind of oil. You see, it seems the

bank could obtain it without difficulty, and since Mr. Miller was in charge of requisitions for supplies, and he also had a key to the warehouse....

Now that he could produce the proper smoke, all that was left was to learn to skywrite. His first few attempts were ridiculous failures. To skywrite you have to write the letters backwards, like they would appear in a mirror, so they can be recognized by the people on the ground. It's not continuous writing, rather each letter is formed by flying an intricate pattern that can only be successfully performed by exact timing. Everything must be planned beforehand, because once you're in the air you can't make heads or tails of what you're doing. A skywriter must also take the wind into calculation, because what you write is always moving along like a cloud. Mr. Miller attacked all these problems with a scientific attitude I was surprised he possessed. He had Debbie take pictures and films of him practicing, which he later carefully studied. After extensive practicing, he finally got his art down to a very fine degree, yet he still wasn't satisfied. He had become quite a perfectionist about his skywriting. There were times I felt a great deal of admiration for Mr. Miller.

He seemed to inhabit a psychological elevator; I could never tell — I don't think he knew himself—which floor he'd step out on, or whether he wouldn't suddenly decide to shoot up seven stories or perhaps down twice that many into a totally different level of being.

Mr. Miller was finally ready to get his business off the ground. He gave his business a name, Aerial Advertising, and a slogan, "An ad everyone looks up to." He acquired quite a few contracts, and his business was off to a successful start. He even became somewhat of a local celebrity. There were articles and pictures of him in the Richmond newspapers, and several aviation magazines also did small articles about him. I think one of his biggest thrills came when Al Tremble, his old Sumpter Military Academy buddy, did an interview with him for the local T.V. news show.

To say the least, Mr. Miller's Aerial Advertising was taking up a great deal of his family's time. His sons were his ground crew, his wife was his secretary, and Debbie went around to different businesses trying to drum up new contracts. Mr. Miller had what most people only dream of; he was making money while doing something



Julie Deab

he loved. He even started to talk about giving up his regular job. He talked of the day when his boys would become pilots and he could expand his business to several planes, and start giving flying exhibitions. He even got Ashby Jr. to start taking flying lessons.

Mr. Miller was really on cloud nine, and seemed to be in a perpetual good mood. He really got into his role as a skywriter. He grew a handlebar moustache, wore a leather jacket, and was always giving the thumbs-up sign. I'm not sure whether he or Snoopy was more of a comic character. His leather jacket, or "leather" as he called it, became a symbol for him. He was always wearing it to keep up his World War I flying-ace image. One night when Ashby Jr. was going out with some of his friends, Mr. Miller told him that if he wanted the girls to flock all over him, he could borrow the "leather".

If I ever was over at Debbie's house at night during those days, I would be lucky to find Mr. Miller awake. His two jobs exhausted him, and you have to remember he was a slightly overweight middle-aged man. Still he pushed himself every day and seemed happy doing it. I think he was afraid of what might happen if he ever stopped and relaxed. I guess everyone was fairly pleased with how things were going except Mrs. Miller. Long ago her husband had been seduced by a plane, and now her own children were falling under his lover's influence.

It hurts me to think of what Mr. Miller did to his wife. She was quite a woman, yet no one in her family appreciated her at all. Unlike her husband, she had gone to college and done quite well. It was really sad that her education went all for naught. Behind every successful man is nothing. Even her sons paid little attention to her, and demanded things of her like their father did. Debbie would always tell me she could never talk with her mother, because her mother couldn't relate to her problems. This may be true, but it was Debbie's father who caused her mother to lose touch. Mrs. Miller was forced to act like a submissive housewife just so she could be accepted in some role... any role. I hated Mr. Miller for what he did to his wife, but nobody else could see.

One nice Sunday afternoon, when I went to visit Debbie, I was surprised to find Mr. Miller at home. I thought he must be sick, since it seemed like such a perfect day for flying. He told me he felt all right, but he looked rather lethargic. I couldn't believe it when he went up to his room to take a nap instead of watching the Daytona 500 on T.V.... I switched to a Celtics-Knicks basketball game.

"Debbie," I asked, "why is your father acting so funny?"

"I don't rightly know, he's been acting real down lately. Why, he hasn't flown in nearly a week."

"Maybe he is tired of flying."

"Don't be silly. You know he loves to fly more'n any thing else in the world."

"Maybe he's nervous about the big air show next week."

"That's it! He's the star attraction next week now that he has gotten some national publicity and he's probably a little nervous."

The next weekend I arrived at the Miller's house early

in the morning to accompany Debbie to the air show. "Jeff," Debbie said as she greeted me at the door, "you won't believe this, but Dad's not goin' to fly today."

"Why?"

"I swear I don't know, but he'll ruin everything if he doesn't fly."

Debbie burst into tears as her mother came down the stairs. She walked over to Debbie and hugged her.

"Everything will be all right, Debbie, your father will be there," Mrs. Miller said.

"But how?" Debbie asked. "He says he's not going."

"He'll go if I have to drag him. Just don't you worry. Why don't you and Jeff take the boys to the airport, and we will meet you there."

"O.K. Mom."

For the first time since I had known Debbie, I saw some respect in her eyes for her mother. Maybe Debbie finally realized what her mother had to contend with.

I don't know how Mrs. Miller convinced her husband to fly in the air show, but they arrived about a half an hour after we did. The first thing I noticed about Mr. Miller was that he wasn't wearing his "leather". He looked like a defeated man, but I couldn't figure out who or what conquered him. He performed in the air show as expected, but not as a World War I flying ace. When he finished his performance he didn't wait around his plane like he usually did, but got in his pick-up and drove straight home by himself.

After that day, Mr. Miller never flew "The Spirit of St. Ben" just for the hell of it. He probably wouldn't have



blown at all if his wife hadn't pushed him to fulfill his contracts. I was really shocked when I found out he had put his Stearman up for sale. It wasn't part of the script at all. It was all so contrary to his character, but then I never could really figure out his character. His family kept asking him why, but he insisted there was nothing uncalculated about his actions. He simply said he needed the money he would get from selling the plane, he wasn't giving his job at the bank his all, and most importantly he was spending too much time away from his home and family. Almost as quickly as it had started, "Aerial Advertising" was no more.

When Debbie told me her father's reasons for selling "The Spirit of St. Ben," I told her he had finally smartened up.

"Debbie," I said, "things will be so much better at home for you now. You'll see, it will be just like I told you it could be."

"Oh Jeff, I really don't know."

"What do you mean?"

"It just won't be the same. It's not Dad."

Debbie was right. "The Spirit of St. Ben" had long been sold, and Mr. Miller was not the same man. Compared to his former self, he didn't seem a man at all. He seldom told stories, and his family didn't seem attracted to him like they once were. Even Mrs. Miller didn't seem happier. I even liked him better the old way. I could hate the old Mr. Miller, and feel good about it. He just seemed too superficial to elicit any strong emotion from the people around him. I wondered why he ever quit flying. He must

have known what would happen. I finally found the answer, when I was talking about going to medical school.

"I think it would be fascinating work," I said.

"Don't do it," Mr. Miller said while staring at his plate.

"What?" I asked, surprised by his comment.

He raised his head and looked me in the eye. "Jeff, please listen at me. I know you're educated and you've never had no respect for my opinions, but believe me when I tell ya not to become a doctor."

"I'm... I'm not sure I understand you, Mr. Miller."

"If ya become a doctor you'll make the bucks, and provide a needed service... Jesus, there's always sick people who need help, but I'll pity you, and I'll pity Debbie, like I now pity myself."

"I'm sorry, but I still don't understand."

"It'll change your life in ways you'd never believe. You'll know a lot... too much. When ya look in a purty girl's face, in my Debbie's face, and ya see a blush fill her cheeks, will ya think of it as a break ripplin' above some disease?"

"I think you're being ridiculous...sir."

"Listen boy! When ya see a naked body will you admire its beauty, or what makes it work?"

"Daddy!" Debbie said, "I'm embarrassed. I've never heard you talk like this."

"Quiet, girl. Jeff, just think whether you'll gain more'n ya lose by learnin' a doctor's trade."

"I'll be able to separate my private and professional life."

"Think what you'll do to your loved ones. Think if you'll be able to look at 'em like ya once could."

"I don't..."

"Why do ya think I quit my flyin'?"

"I don't know."

"The romance and beauty were all gone. I quit noticing the purty things, and the things that use to give me good feelings inside. I only noticed those things that were useful for successful skywritin'."

"Couldn't you just go up and fly without having to write?"

"It's not the same... when I feel a brisk wind in my face, I don't feel like a bird on wing, but I calculate the effect the wind would have on my writin'. I don't want to do it, it just happens. I see my damn skywritin' where I used to see enemy aces. Even the clouds remind me of nuthin' but my own smoke. It's like I'm haunted. My heaven has been turned into hell."

Everyone just sat there and stared at Ashby Miller. His wife picked up her plate and quickly left the room. It was obvious she didn't want to be seen crying. I didn't know what to think. Ashby Miller lived in too many planes of seemingly inconsistent existences for me to understand him. I couldn't decide whether he was more god or devil. The story only ends here because I broke up with Debbie. Maybe I was afraid of her father's blood. Oh, by the way, I decided not to go to medical school.



Julie Doub

WINDOW

The window is only so big
so that, at night, when tall ships pass
into the square, the cut-off masts drive by
like flying wooden lines—
close and imperfectly vertical.
The crazy wind outside might push off the masts
into the window,

but that never happens.
air scoops and dives outside.
the grander objects are outside; they spend
only seconds in the window; they taunt
by not coming in.

The vinegar air inside bulges invisibly
at the open window
where night breezes might skim by and carry
a little away — but do not.

Once I dreamt I got out of bed,
threw my head through the seal to
catch sight of the full masts and followed them
until they bobbed under the gray half
of a strange horizon.

When I woke, I put the vision to paper.
I strangled the dream in long sheets of paper,
but the words stretched off the page, cut-off,
not moving, not stirring any wind
before them,

not meaning, just pushing,
pushing at the burning edge of the page
that disintegrated the dream.
Words passed over the edges and the endings, limits
that made the top of the masts disappear,

and I whispered a profound vision of the lines,
wooden vertical lines, that had swept over me before,
had rolled over my face and
slapped me without freeing me.

The dream of the complete masts might have saved me
but, pulling me out of bed,
it only caused me to burn my lips
on the still edge of that square window.

Brian Marshall

A Work of Remembrance

When they fished you out
of the river mother
your face was shrouded
by a nightgown—

did you cover your eyes
against death?
or was it the swirling
water's veil

for you?
I was at the heart
of this matter
what a pitiful center
for my pride

after all I survived.
The bridge over the Sambre
would not give
you up, we had to fish
like children:

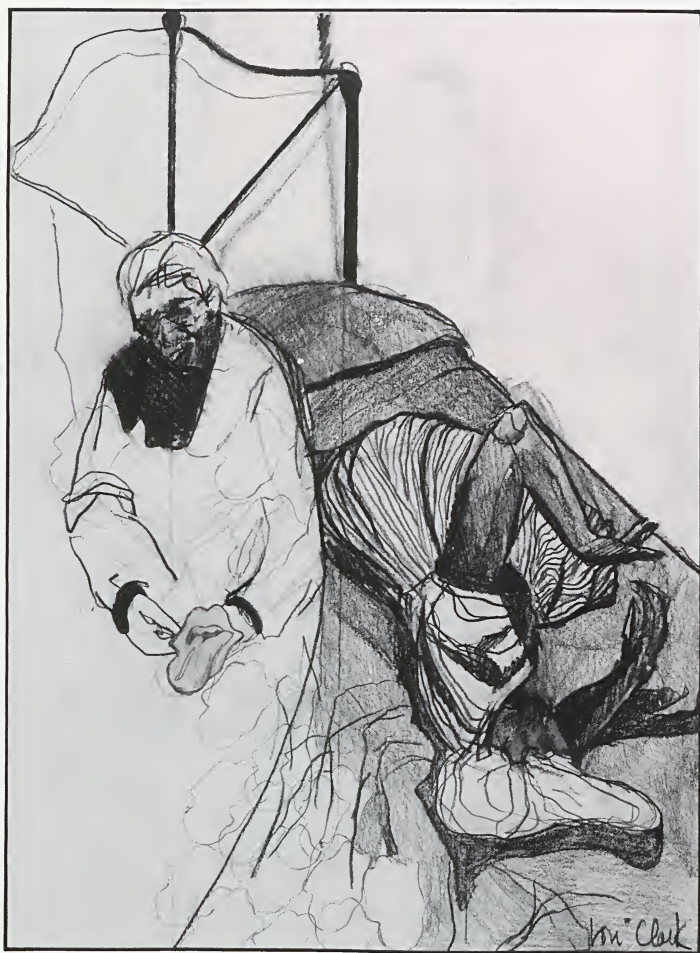
I remember waking
in bed, alone
middle of the night
I woke the family

where were you?
Your footprints
on the pavement and steps
leading to the bridge
made us all wonder.

James Gurley

Sad Song

STEPHEN AMIDON



Lori Clark

"Michael sat at his desk until well after midnight—"

reading sometimes, drinking sometimes. A still cloud of smoke hung around his shoulders and head, reddening his eyes. He had smoked half a pack of cigarettes, extinguishing each one on his left forearm until he had created two neat rows of boiled flesh.

"What's that smell?" his roommate asked. Michael couldn't see him beyond the sphere of light given off by the desk lamp. Looking away, he closed his book and held out his arm under the light; palm up, making it visible. There was silence for a moment.

"You suck," his roommate said softly, his voice cracking with emotion. "I hate you."

Michael looked at the lamp, then screwed the top back on the bottle in front of him. Below, from the lawns surrounding their dorm, he could hear some drunken shouts.

"Yeah," he said. Then he went to bed, not disturbing the sheets.

It was noon before he woke up. He had missed two classes. Michael sat up quickly and rubbed his eyes. On his desk, there was a terse, unsigned note from his roommate, stating that he had gone home for the weekend. He put on a record, then walked down the hall to the bathroom. The showers were running, jetting hot steam into the rest of the room, making the tiled walls and floor transparent with dampness. Some boys were laughing and swearing behind the large curtain, trying to snap each other's naked buttocks with rolled towels. A boy stood shaving sullenly at a sink. Michael walked up next to him and rubbed the mirror with his palm. He noticed the burns on his forearm reflected as his palm was pressed against the mirror. He looked at the arm, running his fingers gently over the erupted burns. Scar tissue and blisters had formed overnight. Then he looked at his face, focusing occasionally on some particular areas, pinching loose skin between his fingers.

"Fuck it!" The boy next to him had cut himself. Michael looked over at his neck, watching the blood gather in the drops of water and bits of shaving cream until the boy covered the cut. Then he washed his face and went down to breakfast.

Some boys were throwing a football on the lawn outside his dorm. Two of them, jostling and laughing, sprinted by Michael as he came out of the door. A third, a black boy, watched them with a smile for a moment, then threw the ball. It spiralled strongly, perfectly, over the shorter boy's hands and into the other's.

"T.D.—Dallas!" one yelled as they jogged back.

Michael walked across campus to the cafeteria. It was a late autumn day; very cold and brilliantly sunny. He squinted and flattened his curly hair against his head as he walked. The cafeteria was an ugly metallic structure, detached from the other semi-gothic buildings of the college. Michael spent most of his time there, reading the paper or watching people from behind cigarette smoke. Today, he took a plate of brussel sprouts and some coffee and sat at an empty table. He didn't touch the food, but

rather smoked a cigarette and looked out the window at a group of students attaching flowers and wire and crepe paper to a flat-bed trailer.

"Hello!"

Three girls stood next to his table. Two were short and ugly, dressed in loose knit clothes. Oversized, crudely carved wooden crosses hung around their necks. The third was a tall, thin girl. She was rather awkward but very good looking, with weightless blond hair and soft features. He recalled having seen her around campus.

"Can we sit with you?"

Michael nodded. They arranged themselves around the table, smiling self-consciously. He extinguished his cigarette in the vegetables.

"We're from the C.Y.L." one of the large girls said loudly. They all smiled at Michael.

"The what?" he asked distantly.

"The Christian Youth League. We'd like you to know what we're all about."

Michael looked out the window again. The float was beginning to take the shape of a lion or cougar or something. Some girls were pouring water over a boy who feigned resistance. Then he stared at the tall girl across the table. She had soft, active eyes that moved constantly from the two talking girls to his tray and hands, then momentarily to his eyes. Then through that cycle again. Passive eyes that reacted immediately to every movement, every word, every sound at the table.

He was silent, not so much to ignore them as to suggest that they had nothing to talk about. They were all a bit confused and intimidated by him. He was good-looking and well-known around the small campus—known as being very talented and somewhat of an asshole. Recently he had given a recital that had bothered many people. Having aced exactly half a sonata (though 'rather drily' it was said), he had slammed his fists on the piano and announced, as he walked out, that the audience could come to his funeral if they wanted to hear the rest. Most were dumbly shocked, but the professor had later risen to the occasion and given Michael a "C." Since then, he had skipped most of his lessons and only played alone.

The girls tried a new tack to reach him.

"What's your major?" one asked.

"Music."

"Oh." Angela's a music major." They indicated the girl across from him. "Do you know each other?"

She mouthed a no.

"I've seen her," he said.

"I'm Tracy, and this is Dawn."

The two girls talked on. They invited him to a prayer meeting. Dawn gave him a pamphlet. All the while Michael stared sullenly at Angela, touching his fingertips indifferently to his cheek. She didn't look at him after the introduction, but seemed interested exclusively in the steam from his coffee cup. After awhile they left, moving over to the next table. Michael drank his coffee and watched the trio corner another student. The cafeteria began to empty. He had a lesson soon.

"Michael!"

A tall boy with a beard and stylishly old clothes sat down heavily beside him. He put a large stack of books on the table, dropping a few on the floor.

"Hey, Andy."

"What have you been up to, man? Haven't seen you."

"I've been sick. Existential nausea," Michael said blandly.

The boy laughed loudly, his body jerking. Michael thought him a fawning idiot.

"That's good!" When he stopped laughing, Andy couldn't think of anything to say. He smiled to himself and stared at the covers of his books.

"Do you know them?" Michael asked after awhile, nodding to the girls who were now getting up from the next table.

"Yeah. Religious schmucks."

"The tall one?"

"Angela? Vaguely. Appropriately named, it seems. She's from the South somewhere. Nobody knows her, really. I'd like to fuck her though. She's pretty good looking for a Christian."

Michael looked over at Andy, who was smiling with a crude masculine complicity — the type of smile that is interchangeable with a wink or a nudge. He frowned slightly and finished his coffee, looking after the girls as they walked around the cafeteria, smiling and handing out pamphlets.

Michael sat in a basement room in the music building, playing a piano. He was very good. The music he played had begun as Brahms but had recently generated into his own improvisation. He would stop occasionally and mutter "shit" or "o.k.," his fingers having overrun his plans. Or he'd gaze at his left hand resting on the keyboard while he gently banged his right hand against his thigh. Then he'd start again. Despite the pauses, however, there was a strict continuity, an order, to his playing.

The acoustic door cracked open beside him. He stopped. Angela walked halfway in, holding a woodwind case. She started when she saw him. It was Saturday, very early in the morning. She hadn't expected to meet anyone.

"I'm sorry." She backed out meekly.

"Wait. Come in."

She froze, uncertain. He improvised a smile. She came in.

"Listen."

She sat stiffly on a chair near the door. He played for awhile, looking at her. She watched his hands attentively. He stopped.

"That's very good," she said quietly. "What is it called?"

"Sad Song." He made up the title, just then.

"Did you write it?"

"No." He had written it the previous summer.

"Who did?"

"My brother." He had never had a brother.

"Is he a musician?"

"He's dead."

"Oh . . . I'm sorry."

"That's o.k. I don't blame you."

Neither said a word. They were both embarrassed. He played more.

"I'm sorry, that was cruel," he said, watching his hands on the keyboard.

"That's o.k. I don't blame you." It was a clever remark but she said it like an unschooled actress, without a hint of feeling or brashness. Michael laughed boyishly as he continued playing. But he stopped when he realized that he was repeating himself. There was an uneasy silence. She got up to go.

"Do you want to see a movie tonight?" he asked quickly.

"I'd like that."

After they had set the details Michael nodded his head, saying "Good, o.k.," and started back on the piano. She hesitated for a moment, as if something hadn't been said, then left.

The movie they saw that evening was a popular adult comedy, described in an advertisement as being "witty, sensitive, bitter, provocative and enthralling." They had said little to each other, their conversation consisting basically of Michael's bitter comments and attempts at irony. Standing in the lobby before the show, they were uneasily aware of a couple in front of them who kept putting their hands in each other's back pants pockets. After awhile, Michael tapped them both on the shoulder.

"Excuse me."

"Yes?" The guy was big. He had a moustache.

"Could you please keep your hands off each others' ass until we get inside? That sort of intimacy is unsettling to a couple on their first date."

The guy looked stupidly at Michael. His girlfriend, sensing that perhaps something clever had been said, laughed. Angela had laughed a little too, though not thinking the remark funny. He confused her. Yet she was fond of that new sensation - confusion. It thrilled her. Like other dreams had thrilled her. Like Jesus. Throughout her childhood, He had been her boyfriend. They had held hands, whispered things to each other, remembered each others' birthday. He had taken her to church picnics, walked her home from school. Since she could remember there had been the oil painting of Christ above her bed — the sparkling blue eyes, strong and pure cheek bones, long dark hair and beard neatly combed, and a tailored robe a just-bleached white. She said her prayers as if she were shyly chatting on the phone.

But the prayers had come harder recently. She began to sense the sincerity of the girls in her dorm who told her how beautiful she was, began to sense that the boys staring at her were not just gazing impersonally. And in the shower she had come to enjoy her fingers and soap on her flesh now and then, and had developed a habit of lingering awhile on the more sensitive areas. In the cinema, he had unexpectedly touched her like that. During a preview, he had put his hand on her collarbone and the soft skin beneath it. But just for a moment, with neither

"Sometimes recently he wanted to purge the melodrama, the bad irony, from his life. But it was hard to stop—bitterness had become reflexive."

pressure nor a word. She shivered and looked blankly down. His hand was strange — thin, calloused at the fingertips, nails chewed tight. It had thrilled her.

The theatre was a mile or so from the campus. They walked slowly back through the city. Many years ago it had been an austere college town, self-consciously intellectual and middle class. But immigrants and industry had made it into a big, dirty city with a college buried in the middle. The streets around the campus were lined with cheap merchants — clothing shops and pizzerias. They were noisy streets, with the buses and the kids and the transistor radios. At night one could hear regularly on campus the sounds of sirens from the city.

It had rained earlier in the day, and now low clouds threatened snow. They walked silently, stepping around dark puddles. The movie had numbed them, imposed itself between them. Michael's head and eyes hurt. The city's lights and sounds annoyed him. He swore when he touched his pocket and realized that he had forgotten his cigarettes. He turned to her.

"Do you want to save my soul?" he asked bitterly.

She was startled.

"No."

"Well, why are you here with me?"

"Because I like you." That was all she could think to say — the rest resisted words.

"But you like everybody, right?"

"Well, yes. Don't you?"

"No. I don't like anything. I don't give a shit about anything." He said this without the bitter melodrama of his previous conversation. Sometimes recently he wanted to purge the melodrama, the bad irony, from his life. But it was hard to stop — bitterness had become reflexive.

"But what about your music? You're pretty good, I think."

"I hate it. It hurts me to play."

"But why —"

"Do I play? I don't know. I suppose I feel obliged to play because I'm good." He looked at her. "Don't you feel obliged to something?"

"To people, I suppose."

"To me?" he asked sharply.

"What? No. Why do you ask that?"

He smiled, almost cruelly.

"No reason."

She looked at him with a pained expression.

"It's not that at all. It's not what you think at all."

"O.K. Sorry," he said distantly.

There was a strained silence as they walked on. Ahead, a group of boys piled out of a pinball arcade onto the sidewalk in front of them. They were "townies" — sons of factory workers and maintenance men, with long dirty hair and leather jackets. They passed by closely, sullenly. The last boy in the group, too tall, too fat, stopped when he saw Angela and lurched drunkenly toward her.

"Hey, baby," he slurred, putting his face close to hers as they passed. He stared after them as they walked away, then followed. They glanced at each other, conscious of the fat boy. He continued with his baiting, growing closer and louder. They pretended to ignore. When he caught up with them, he grabbed Michael by the arm and spun him around.

"Hey, baby," he said stupidly, this time to Michael.

They stood facing each other, their faces illuminated by the flashing colored lights from the arcade. Angela said, "Don't. Let's go." The boy tried to look menacing, but just swayed slightly and half-closed his watery eyes. His leather coat was too small, exposing his hairless belly and chest, and formless wrists and hands that clenched and unclenched. He smelled of old sweat and liquor. His friends had walked on, not noticing him. Michael smiled, mostly with his eyes, his mouth moving only slightly. The boy looked back, perplexed, as if the last few minutes had been imposed upon him, as if he had been thrust into a situation beyond his control. He blinked drunkenly against the lights of a passing car.

"You're a fucking punk," he said half-heartedly to Michael.

"O.K. Come on," Michael said, turning to Angela and taking her arm.

"Punk! Punk!" The boy yelled after them. Michael let go her arm.

"I think I just defended your virtue. Or maybe mine," he said. She smiled. "No, on second thought, it was his."

The tension relieved, they laughed for awhile and talked animatedly the rest of the way back to the campus. It was as if something had become understood.

His dorm was closer. They hesitated when they arrived there.

"Well good night . . . thank you," she said, not moving.

"Come here." He noticed that her face became peculiarly blank and passive when he kissed it.

The fat boy had watched them walk away, then turned sullenly and walked after his friends. He pulled his jacket together and shivered. Two smaller boys ran by him from behind, each yelling "fat ass" and slapping him on the side of the head. He tried to kick one of them but slipped on some ice, landing on his back with a heavy grunt. They stood at a safe distance and jeered him, until he hurled a bottle after them and began to chase. They easily outdistanced him. He stopped to rest, bending over and angrily watching his breath cloud in the cold air. A dog barked angrily next to him from behind a fence, straining at its leash and pawing the chain links. It was a skinny old German shepherd with long, cracked teeth. The fat boy kicked at it with his heavy boots, catching squarely the dog's snout. It yelped loudly and backed away, licking furiously at the bloodied area.

His friends had stopped at a corner, beneath a street lamp.

"Where were you?" one asked when he walked up.

"I got into a fight."

"With who?"

"Some college fag. I kicked his ass."

They all eyed him silently. Finally, one of the boys jerked his head and started out down the street. The rest followed.

They made love twice. The first time was hurried, confused. The second was moodier, longer, almost monotonous. Michael then waited until Angela breathed slowly and regularly before he got out of bed and sat at his

desk. He watched her sleeping for awhile, then looked out the window. It was snowing. He put a shirt over his lamp and turned it on. He drew for awhile on a notebook cover — meaningless figures. Then he arranged some loose things on his desk — pencils, paper clips, cigarette butts — into neat geometrical shapes. It wasn't cold in the room, but he shivered, being naked. Soon he fell asleep, his head resting on a pile of books.

He awoke a bit after dawn. His neck was stiff from the awkward position. Angela slept, partially uncovered. He looked at her fluttering eyes, her thin neck, her small, girlishly pointed breasts. The chair creaked as he shifted his weight, so he sat perfectly still, not wanting to wake her. Occasionally he'd doze off, but only for a moment, his head bobbing slowly down then quickly up into consciousness.

She awoke after awhile. For a moment she lay still, confused. Then she saw him sitting over her. Quickly, she pulled the sheet to her neck and averted her eyes. Then, as quickly, she thrust the sheet off and began to dress. She ripped her panties as she stepped clumsily into them. She couldn't find a shoe. Michael watched from the chair, not moving.

"I've got to go," she said, not looking at him. She hurried to the door.

"Hey," he said.

She stopped and turned around looking at his hands. But he couldn't think of anything to say. After a moment she left the room, not shutting the door. He absently flicked the pencils and butts off his desk onto the floor. After awhile he stopped and shivered. He looked at the open door and kicked it shut with a bare foot. Then he climbed into bed and almost instantly fell asleep.

~~~~~

brown eyes warm  
open slowly.  
warm hard under soft  
brown legs  
against mine.  
gentle voice, hands  
warm mouth  
knowing

*Janet Bynum*

# Slush And Stark

The first day of winter,  
You feel it.  
It's dark,  
And hazy, as if slush was suspended in the air.  
It's a day of doing only things that have to be done,  
And dreaming only between the times these things are being done.  
And where you are busy,  
The fluorescent light has a stark glow,  
Because today it's really needed.  
Because there is no real light today.

*Jackie Werth*



*Julie Douth*



# Le Subjonctif N'existe Pas

My education  
is waterproof in spots.

When reading Keats  
A few cold drops splash my cheeks.  
A sudden drizzle startles me  
When it comes to Wars of Roses, red or white.  
The quantum theory of light  
Soaks my sleeping bag.

Drenched  
I pore over my French grammar  
I am content that you fasse—

A kindly professor hands me in a towel  
I thank him, wring it out  
and wipe my face.

*Evelyn Byrd Tribble*



William Harmon is a poet, critic, and lecturer at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Some of his latest works are *The Intussuception of Miss Mary America*, published in 1976, and *Time in Ezra Pound's Work*, a critical study published in 1977. Mr. Harmon recently edited the *Oxford Book of American Light Verse*, published in 1979. He is engaged in writing critical studies of T.S. Eliot and A.R. Ammons. Mr. Harmon frequently contributes to journals such as *Antioch Review*, the *San Francisco Review*, and the *Carolina Quarterly*.

Doris Betts is a three-time winner of the Sir Walter Raleigh Award for best fiction by a North Carolinian. Her collection of short stories, *Beasts of the Southern Wild*, was one of 12 finalists for the National Book Award in 1973. Mrs. Betts teaches writing at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

## Panel of Judges

Judith Johnson Sherwin is a novelist, playwright, and poet whose works include: a play, "The Time of the Assassins" published in 1962; *Impossible Buildings*, a volume of poems published in 1973; and a number of short stories. Her poetry has been featured in *Atlantic*, *Massachusetts Review*, *Made-moiselle*, and *Ms*. In 1974, Ms. Sherwin won the *St. Andrews Review* prize for her poem, "How the Dead Count," published subsequently in 1978 as a collection of poems. Her latest work is *Dead's Good Company*, a book of poems published in 1979. She is also working on a novel. Although she lives in New York, Ms. Sherwin is at Wake Forest this semester as poet in residence.

Guy Owen is best known for the creation of Mordecai Jones, the Flim-Flam Man, introduced in *The Ballad of the Flim-Flam Man* (1965) and followed in another novel and a collection of short stories. His novel, *Journey for Jordel*, was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize. Since 1962, he has taught modern literature and creative writing at North Carolina State University. Until 1978, Mr. Owens edited *Southern Poetry Review* and for five years co-edited *North Carolina Folklore*.



## Judges' Pen

### On G. Dale Neal's "Patmos":

Neal takes a sentimental idea (rather stale, too) and makes it come alive, seem fresh again. A touching story. The setting is well-handled too. Timely with drugs, divorce, etc. A big plus here is the bits of poetry connected with Patmos's blurred vision: the disappearing gulls, etc. Patmos is an interesting, believable character: the others are kept flat as they should be. This is a well-focused story—the work of a promising and talented young writer.

—Guy Owen

### On Stephen Amidon's "Sad Song":

This is an interesting work. I wish I could like Michael more—he seems a boring smartass—but she's interesting.

—Doris Betts

### On Craig Wheaton's "Icarian Flight":

An excellent story, fresh material, fully realized. I've never read a story about skywriting. Wheaton seems to know his onions here. He writes with authority, and this won my admiration. He also sustains the first-person voice here. (Once or twice this sounds like Salinger.) More importantly, he creates a fine three-dimensional character in Mr. Miller; we feel that we know him and we care about his wife and children.

—Guy Owen

### On Evelyn B. Tribble's "Le Subjonctif N'existe Pas":

A witty and controlled poem, which does exactly what it attempts without any excesses or false touches. The first two lines have charm and wit. The rhymes and off rhymes work together neatly and emphasize the wit.

—Judith Sherwin

### On Robin Byrd's "In Need of Water":

"In Need of Water" has a terrific, original, lively, conversational opening, which caught my attention immediately, and has a touch of the unpredictably nutty to it, which I enjoyed.

—Judith Sherwin

### On James Gurley's "A Work of Remembrance":

"A Work of Remembrance" is a potentially melodramatic subject saved by intelligently prosaic handling.

—William Harmon

### On Esther Hill's "Journey":

Tidy vignette with some convincing acoustic effects (especially the succession of long stressed syllables all beginning with a bilabial followed by a back vowel: "porch boards/moaning:")

—William Harmon

### On Brian Marshall's "Window":

"Window" was the only fairly complex and ambitious poem not to strike a few wrong notes through clumsiness or lack of control. The beginning is lively, sounds like a real human being talking instead of an artificial construction. The poem uses good and arresting imagery, well and resourcefully developed.

—Judith Sherwin

### On Jackie Werth's "Slush and Stark":

Nicely unambitious, with good use of words of one and two syllables.

—William Harmon



# SI J'AVAIS SU...

Si j'avais su que la terre etait ronde  
Je n'aurais pas cherche a comprendre  
C'est ma vie, je ne veut pas la vendre  
A cette societe qui pourrit le monde

Si j'avais su que les hommes etaient laches  
Et cruels j'aurais fait une fuite  
Partir loin, devenir hermite  
Ne plus etre soumis a un travail sans relache

Si j'avais su construire le paradis  
Je l'aurais fait n'importe quand  
N'importe ou, mais pas n'importe comment  
Et il serait agreable d'y vivre sa vie

Si j'avais su comment on meurt  
Sans peur, sans souci  
Comment sera notre nouvelle vie  
Dans un monde surement meilleur

Je serais alle avec toi, je t'aurais cru  
Si j'avais su...

*Fernando Pardo*



The champagne flowed; the beautiful people gathered. Looking as if they had stepped from the pages of *Gentlemen's Quarterly*, several men studied the portrait of a woman shedding her skin. Two women whispered excitedly among themselves about the nudes on the wall, while a group of elderly ladies chattered endlessly about the various painted scenes mounted on the enameled counter-tops. From his place on the wall, an enormous elephant gazed with somber gray eyes into the crowd.

This melange of fashion and art was the setting of an art exhibition held recently at Forum VI in Greensboro. The artist was Jim Moon — a native of Graham, North Carolina, who has been leaving quite an impression on the world of art. In the latter part of November, *The Student* had an opportunity to meet the 51-year-old artist who characterizes himself as a "semi-recluse who enjoys the company of the intellectual and the very famous."

Semi-recluse is precisely the term to characterize Moon. Living in a remote section of Davidson County, he rarely has visitors unless they are invited. At present his life is simple and unpretentious, yet it is one of mobility (he lived in Italy for 15 years). And it is one of art. He paints all day, every day.

JENNY SHARPE

## Jim Moon's Art Defies All Labels — Except Success

Moon has studied art at Cooper Union, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the University for Foreigners in Perugia, Italy, the College of William and Mary, and has done graduate study at Mexico City College, the Boston Museum School, and Columbia University. He has also been the Director of Foreign Programs at the Northwood Institute, the head of the visual arts department at the North Carolina School of the Arts, a part-time instructor and director of the Asolo, Italy program at Salem College, head of the art department at Barber-Scotia College, and has taught at Hofstra University and at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. His paintings are in the North Carolina Museum of Art, the New York Museum of Modern Art, and in the collections of Peggy Guggenheim, choreographer Martha Graham, and writer Carson McCullers.



The most striking feature about Moon's style is the lack of a precise category in which to place it. His work has been described as "neo-surrealistic," "partly naturalistic, partly abstractionist." Sterling M. Boyd, professor emeritus of art at Wake Forest, described Moon's work as "wonderful . . . displaying a sly wit and humor." The artist, however, does not care for art categorization and criticism. He feels that art should be taken for what it is: "Everything should be seen as what it is, not what it isn't." There are no deep psychological motives for his work; Moon feels that it is just something he happens to do, and he could just as easily be doing something other than painting.

Moon works slowly, and he is constantly retouching old paintings. Once he has finished a painting, however, he never wants to see it again. A problem that has recently surfaced for the artist is the threat of having forty of his paintings returned to him from William Hull, a native of Long Island who has collected much of Moon's work. Hull is retired and has no heirs. "If they were ever returned," Moon contends, "I would simply start working on them again."

Moon's obvious enjoyment of the very famous is evidenced by his friendship with Peggy Guggenheim, renowned art collector who died a month after the interview with the artist. (Miss Guggenheim's 266-piece art



collection is housed at her palatial residence next door to Wake Forest's Venice House.) Moon, who met Miss Guggenheim in 1952, spoke of her frequently, describing their relationship as beyond that of artist and patron: "She's strictly a friend."

Moon describes his friend with something more than mere admiration: "She has a complicated job — she has established the best collection of contemporary art in the

world; she is responsible for the flowering of art in New York at the end of World War II; and it was through her patronage that the avant-garde became established in the U.S." Moon adds further, "She has a sense of humor based on a frank and humble idea of herself."

Moon has opinions concerning the state of the arts in North Carolina, contending that there is a certain amount of fakery with which it is now associated; that is

art has been reduced to pure business venture. He feels that "every state has an artist who paints in the Andrew Wyeth style, one characterized by sentimentality, nostalgia, and a pseudo-photographic effect. The fakery comes into play when the artistically naive are led to believe that these paintings or prints will be good investments — of course they never are. The scenes are dead, like a stuffed animal, a taxidermy of life, as it were."

Moon also has decided views on the quality of today's art education. He feels that art (the fine arts) should not be mixed with the liberal arts: "It's a craft, and a studio session should be at least six hours long; an art student really hasn't the time for anything outside of his craft." He further remarks that this generation is the "golden age of the amateur."

From his experiences as an instructor, Moon feels that the North Carolina educational system discourages art: "It's just not progressive." Moreover, he adds that "thought is repressed; North Carolina has a history of

educational systems run by wealthy mill owners, promoting an extremely crooked situation — one that permits organizations like the KKK to flourish. The problem is a socio-economic one; money has not been channeled into the proper places." Moon's advice to the aspiring artist is to find out what sort of education he would like, and then to attain it — "It takes initiative."

Like their innovator, the myriad of prints and paintings and the crowds of "beautiful people" are mobile. They follow the artist. Moon's initiative seems geared towards more travel, though his plans are not definite. Currently he has shows scheduled in Washington, D.C., Paris, and Italy. He also has received an invitation from the Greek Embassy in Washington to have a studio and exhibit in Greece next year. But wherever the artist intends to go, it will most certainly be in a direction of artistic acclaim and success, perhaps under the auspices of an enormous elephant with somber gray eyes.





# Theater: Wake's Technical Toybox

*The Student is running a three-part series of articles on the James Ralph Scales Fine Arts Center. In this issue we cover theater, and in the third will outline the proposed music wing. This series was prepared by Paula Dale and Catherine Frier.*

The Fine Arts Center was one of the top five educational facilities in the United States when it was built. Those technically superior aspects of the center are most evident to the public in the theater auditorium, which reflects meticulous planning and attention to detail. A 100-by-45 foot proscenium thrust stage has a revolving annular stage around a stationary center stage; an elevator platform drops part of the stage down to become an orchestra pit, or can be lowered completely to transfer scenery from basement storage areas; scenery is hoisted from a 70-foot fly loft, a height most producers dream of because it assures no one in the audience can see the next scene dangling above him.

The circular lab theater is an exclusive design by Jo Mielziner and features 124 seats on three tiered wagons that move on circular tracks around the stage. Eight projectors suspended in the center of the room produce a 360-degree image of scenes or mood lighting.

The lighting system for the Fine Arts Center theater is also one of the most advanced available. Light intensity and timing are fed into a computerized control head with 100 memories. The "Q-file" then automatically directs lighting for a performance when a single operator presses a cue button. A theater student exposed to the less complex lights in the theater system and then taught to use the Q-file should be sufficiently educated to operate any system of lighting.

Russell Houchen, technical director, admits that the theater is far beyond the artistic abilities of the present faculty, staff and students, but asserts "That's nice to know. There is something to work towards; we haven't used it up. Future generations will be more and more computer oriented, and this is the only theater Wake is going to have for a long time. The fact that it is sophisticated allows us, forces us, to be on our toes."



Eighty to ninety percent of the theater students can use the sound equipment, lighting equipment, or both, according to Donald H. Wolfe, chairman of the department of speech, communication and theater arts. Courses are offered in each area of technical gadgetry, although Houchen noted the purpose of Wake Forest is not to turn out specialists, but to turn out well-rounded undergraduates.

More and more non-majors are taking theater courses. This recent popularity can be attributed partially to a curriculum change which allows introductory courses in theater, art or music to satisfy divisional requirements. Another contributing factor, according to Wolfe, is the growing reputation of the Fine Arts Center. More and more prospective theater students are attracted to Wake Forest by the large, well-equipped theater.

Any student in the university willing to follow safety regulations and ask a technical assistant to help him can become trained to use the theater's technical equipment. Students are encouraged to walk in and ask to be shown the ropes. The staff is amenable to training and supervising when asked. Houchen sees the technical aspects of the theater equipment as a vehicle for instilling an appreciation for theater in students who feel they cannot become involved in other capacities. He admits that too few students not directly involved with the theater recognize the opportunity to run the lights or learn to operate the

sound equipment, and attributes this to a faculty overly occupied with public relations work.

The technical toolbox can make theater exciting, but is the cache of elaborate equipment in the Fine Arts Center theater necessary for a department boasting only 26 majors? The theater department says yes, and sees the equipment as vital to a good education since it permits the students to gain experience in the use of a computerized lighting system. The key word here is "possibility." Wake Forest offers an environment with unlimited potential for learning. Students in other schools can learn about hydraulics in a lecture class. "Our students," says Houchen, "can go down and get greasy."

The inherent danger, admits Houchen, is turning out push-button students. This can be avoided as long as the department continues to emphasize the process underlying sophisticated equipment such as the Q-file. In many instances, technology not only replaces mundane work, but makes possible larger scale productions and sets than could otherwise be realized by the small department. The hydraulic hammers, for example, are used frequently to sidestep monotonous set building. Such equipment releases students to try at least one innovation in each set they build, such as the circular staircase welded for the production of "Company."

Wolfe feels that the small number of theater majors can be attributed to the fact that theater majors prepare themselves for a theater career, when many Wake Forest students are more interested in pursuing other professional careers. Very few students, he explains, are willing to confine themselves to a major as demanding as theater which has a limited horizon of career possibilities.

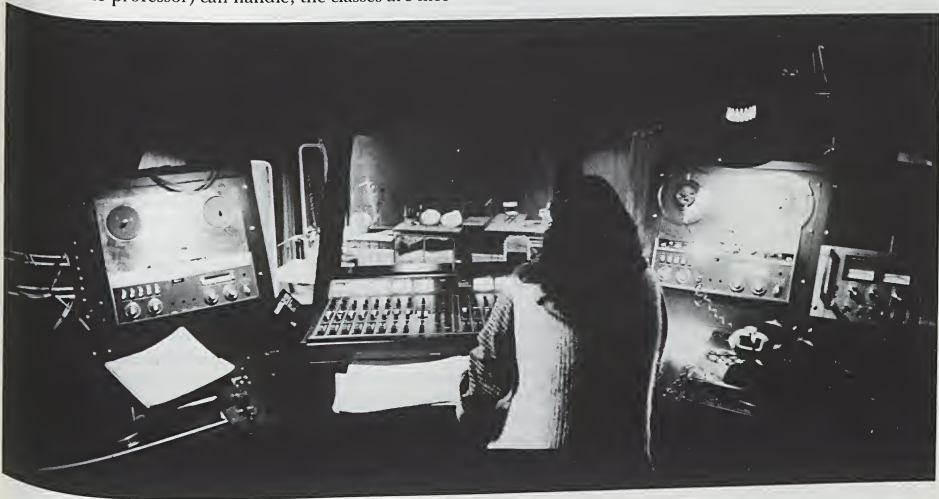
The potential for growth remains one of the positive aspects of the theater building. Right now, Houchen says, "There aren't more students than we (three full-time and one part-time professor) can handle; the classes are nice

and small." But he is perceiving a growing interest in theater and is pleased the department has plenty of room for expansion. "The building doesn't limit us. We have three professors . . . the facility could handle twenty-seven."

Use of the theater is not restricted to the Wake Forest community. It is leased to Friends of Dance every year when this local non-profit organization sponsors a dance theater. The Piedmont Chamber Orchestra has found the Fine Arts Center facilities satisfactory, as has the Little Theater for the last session of the ACT program. Wolfe notes that the theater is usually occupied with Wake Forest productions and adds, "We don't feel it necessary to sidestep our own programs to entice others."

Considering the future of the theater program at Wake Forest can perhaps justify the investment in the awesome technical capacity of the theater. But with so few students who can use that equipment now, has the university felt comfortable with investing in a showpiece theater for a liberal arts college? Provost Edwin Wilson maintains that because the theater benefits not only students enrolled in the theater department program, but also serves a public function for the university, investing in elaborate facilities can be justified. He points to the symbolic value of the theater as representing a commitment to the arts at Wake Forest.

The theater department finds itself now at a stage where seven students operating a Q-file worth one quarter of a million dollars is acceptable on the basis of community service, and artistic and educational commitment. Obviously, the department expects to grow and fill out its elaborate skin as more and more students filter into the theater programs and realize the educational value of becoming skilled in the technical aspects of a stage production.



CHIFF BRIT



# We, Poor Figures

Erin E. Campbell

*"If you have assumed a character beyond your strength, you have both played a poor figure in that, and neglected one that is within your powers."*

—Epictetus

Eddie—his suicide has perplexed me since last August when he took his life. "Why-why-why," the question clicked like a monotonous pendulum in my mind. I felt there was something that extended beyond the tragic novelty of a 15-year-old boy who would kill himself because his favorite television show, a science fiction program, had been cancelled.

Yes, Eddie's case is certainly isolated enough. Few persons reduce their ties with life to a single superficial thread. It is unusual that anyone as consumed with space subjects as he, living in this age, could have grown bored with life. Eddie was an above-average student, but he had been condemned when he was 11 by a psychiatrist who claimed there was nothing for Eddie to excel in and that there was no real challenge for him here on earth. Four years later Eddie threw himself off a bridge.

Eddie's death was dredged from my memory a short while later when I learned that suicides of youths have risen 9,000 percent in the last decade. Almost 5,000 young Americans are killing themselves every year now. Why has life suddenly become so overwhelming, so terrifying that thousands have chosen to forsake their existence before even reaching adulthood?

More and more older people are saying, "I would not want to be a young person coming up today." These are odd sentiments for indi-

viduals who had been raised in Depression years, had endured world war and who now are able to see their children with prosperity and opportunities unknown in their day. Indeed, these older generations have created this opulence not only to compensate for those times of privation, but also to shelter their offspring from similar adversities. The legacy they leave is a huge and rapid advancement in our lifestyle that is manipulated by technology.

This advancement has redesigned our modes of thinking. We have been shedding steadily the rigidity of learning material by rote, replacing it with more flexibility and creativity. Much of our traditional learning methods and subject matter considered irrelevant to contemporary society has been abandoned. Our emphasis has shifted from meticulously and painfully studying primary concepts to quickly catching a multitude of innovative ideas as they are flung at us.

It had been sufficient to set our sights forward, rushing where our technology led us, but in doing so we have left a necessary part of ourselves behind. In general, young people today have not been put in touch with the more basic origins of our knowledge. Many are rushed into specialized, complex areas of learning before acquiring a firm command of the rudiments of education. They venture into innovation without having first developed elementary skills.

The results of this uneven, imbalanced education are now being realized. By omitting intermediate steps in learning, we have produced and are producing educational cripples. Their highly technical knowledge

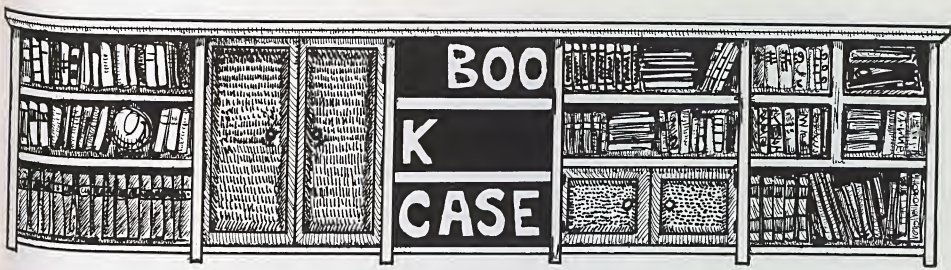
rests precariously on a foundation lacking substance. After leaping up to elevated knowledge, some—like Eddie—suffer an erosion of the educational structure that has shaped their lives, and they eventually tumble from such dubious heights.

Not all—and certainly not the majority—become shattered hulls so easily toppled. A few, the fortunate ones, endure the pain of retracing their progress and filling the gaps in their background. Only then are they able to make a meaningful progression.

The majority, however, finds itself in stalemate: unwilling to regress temporarily to fundamental learning and unable to advance to more complex knowledge. In this stagnation grows apathy—apathy that has now become epidemic. With it we numb our senses to the insecurities of rushing into a rapidly altering future for which we have not prepared ourselves.

We, today's students, are among the first generation brought up in this new approach. In many ways we are like untrained athletes trying to set new records: the ability is there, but it has not yet been developed. It is a fallacious belief that we can not significantly further ourselves if we must devote more than a little time and attention to past knowledge. Without it, we do not have the strength and discipline to control our current technology. Unless we include those essential intermediate steps, we shall continue to produce ineffectual minds and frustrated visionaries.

Eddie was not a genius misunderstood by the world; he was a boy with potential who had not first learned to understand his world before he tried to reach for the universe.



**PHILIP ROTH**  
**The Ghost Writer**  
**Farrar, Straus, and Giroux**  
**\$8.95**

Outrage, misunderstanding and indignation are traditional elements in the public's reception of new writers. After all, consider the reaction to Joyce, or to Flaubert. To Thomas Wolfe. To Nathan Zuckerman.

Such is the consideration that Zuckerman, narrator of Philip Roth's new novel, *The Ghost Writer*, seeks in literary precedent—admittedly scant consolation, considering the particular circumstances of Nathan's condemnation. For it is not an incensed Irish public that has reviled his work, but his own father in Newark; Dr. Zuckerman objects not to any general pattern of "disloyalty or treachery or immorality" in his son's writings, but specifically to Nathan's latest short story, concerning a recent venomous court wrangle taken from Zuckerman family annals. This story is actually a well-written and compelling description of Nathan's middle-class Jewish background. To his father, however, it is an unjustifiably demeaning portrayal of Jews, the subject of such probing inquiries as "Can you honestly say that there is anything in your short story that would not warm the heart of a Julius Streicher or a Joseph Goebbels?" Nathan is adamant in his refusal to submit aesthetic values to the dictates of his father's ethnic sensitivity, and he notes that consequently

"after two decades of a more or less unbroken amiable conversation, we had not been speaking for nearly five weeks now, and I was off and away seeking patriarchal validation elsewhere."

In his quest for a substitute father, Nathan heads straight for the sanctuary of E. I. Lonoff, his most-admired living writer and "the most famous literary ascetic in America." As an undergraduate at the University of Chicago, Nathan had discovered Lonoff's stories, fantasies of American life that were somehow mysteriously deep in their simplicity. Seemingly "to say something new and wrenching to Gentiles about Jews and to Jews about themselves," the distinctive "Lonovian" style had aroused in Nathan an enduring sense of admiration for and identification with the older man. Thus at 23, a published writer in his own right, feeling utter frustration with parental misunderstanding of his literary message, Nathan accepts a dinner invitation from Lonoff as the chance to offer himself as candidate for "nothing less than E. I. Lonoff's spiritual son."

*The Ghost Writer* is Nathan's narrative of his first visit to Lonoff's Berkshire mountain farmhouse for dinner one snowy December afternoon. Beginning with his initial surprise at Lonoff's physical appearance ("My impression was that E. I. Lonoff looked more like the local superintendent of schools than the region's most original storyteller since Melville and Hawthorne."), Nathan's evening with his idol develops as an uncensored and increasingly puzzling exposure to the man and his personal life. Lonoff's

first description of his own career communicates mildly ironic dissatisfaction with his style of literary asceticism: "I turn sentences around. That's my life. I write a sentence and then turn it around. Then I look at it and I turn it around again. Then I have lunch." Further indications of unrest come from Lonoff's wife, Hope, sometime poet of nature and canner of tomatoes, who brings the quiet dinner to a close by abruptly smashing her wineglass against the wall. Finally, Nathan meets the fascinating Amy Bellette, introduced as a former college student of Lonoff's. Her not-quite-clear role in the author's family keeps Nathan's imagination running in high gear—is she Lonoff's granddaughter? his concubine? or the perfect Jewish solution to Nathan's own problems with his father back in Newark?

Along with the intriguing complexities of the Lonoff household, some difficult questions about the art of writing occupy Nathan's thoughts as his dinner visit lengthens to an overnight stay. Though a life dedicated purely to the creation of art is attractive to Nathan, he must also consider Lonoff's admonition: "If your life consists of reading and writing and looking at the snow, you'll wind up like me. Fantasy for thirty years." And, adds Nathan, "Lonoff made 'Fantasy' sound like a breakfast cereal." If the vitality of Nathan's art, then, demands that he continue to write from both the "slimy" and the "sublime" of his distinctively Jewish experience, he must still deal with his father's contention that "People don't read art—they read about *people*."



And they judge them as such."

In *The Ghost Writer*, published exactly twenty years after the appearance of his own first novel, Roth portrays with graceful sympathy and humor the peculiar anxieties and amazing imaginings of the young writer Nathan. Through Nathan's eyes, Roth achieves an engaging and skillful example of characterization as Lonoff emerges as an individual from the limits of Nathan's idealization. In Nathan's voice, he presents a generally entertaining piece of storytelling. Throughout the novel, Roth's emphasis is a reflection on the demands and the consequences of art as he raises new and complicated questions about the relationships among the writer, his material and the public to whom he gives his "art."

by Elisabeth Stephens

---

**C. P. SNOW**  
**A Coat of Varnish**  
**Scribner \$10.95**

---

In the furthest sense of the word this novel is not the typical murder mystery one usually reads. Despite the police detective and his organization, the brutal murder of one of England's nineteenth-century dames, and the mercenary motive of killing for money, this novel is quite extraordinary.

The title encapsulates the whole story: civilization is the coat of varnish that thinly masks the beast in humanity that is always near the surface, ready to manifest itself in the most savage of ways. The setting and characterizations reinforce this idea in subtle, interesting ways that speak well of Snow's ability as a writer. The images he creates show the decadence behind the facade of British culture, as do the relationships between char-

acters. White, outwardly prim and proper, reveals in the promiscuity and financial misdoings in the novel another aspect of that coat of varnish.

The setting is important to *Coat of Varnish*. Belgrovia is a small, expensive region of London sectioned into squares with gardens and uniformly built mansions. The shopping areas and smaller apartments and houses make the setting, as Snow puts it, "an elegant piece of urban composition..." emphasizing the dichotomy between the shining exterior and corrupt interior. The author furthers this incongruity by mentioning that basements are sublet illegally by otherwise honest people.

He describes a small English pub as ordinary, with leather-lined comfort and a quiet, cozy saloon. One Saturday evening the peace is shattered when a mob of drunken rugby players enter, abuse the patrons, and help themselves to the bar. The scene is calmed by two policemen who move the unruly rabble outside. Inside, the customers are shocked that this sort of episode could happen in their neighborhood. In this and other scenes, Snow reveals the fragility and deceptiveness of outward appearances and the decadence that lives just below this thin layer.

All of the characters are adults with histories that Snow uses to add interest to the characterizations. They all have prior experiences and relationships that affect the plot. Humphrey Leigh is a former intelligence officer living off his pension and fading into the woodwork even more than he did on the job. While sometimes omniscient about events in the plot, Snow tells most of the story through Humphrey's eyes. He is the first person to figure out "whodunit," but he does not tell the detective until his friend has pieced the puzzle together himself. Humphrey is described by Snow as an intelligent bachelor with two grown children, having an affair with his neighbor's wife. As an adept word-fencer he is the ideal insider to probe the suspects in an unassuming manner. In doing so he learns that his affair is relatively innocent compared with the lives of

others; sodomy and indiscriminate swapping of sexual partners is yet another facet obscured by the veneer of British culture.

Little can be said of Lady Ashbrook the victim in this story. An old woman who takes nothing for granted, she disapproves of almost everyone and little surprised at the evil in the world. Snow depicts her as one of the few grande dames left in British society. Her own lack of morality manifests itself in tax evasion. She sets up a scheme to send herself tax-free money from America. She helps her doctor do the same by paying him in cash: she gets a discount, and he pockets the money without paying taxes.

Frank Briers is Snow's best character—a brilliant, intuitive, street-wise detective in charge of a large police investigation. On the job he is constantly probing and seeking possibilities to narrow the field of suspects, even distrusting his friend Humphrey. As the investigation drags on, however, he goes to Humphrey for ideas and is soon on the right track. He interrogates suspects with admirable skill, and though he gets closer to the truth, he turns up nothing more than corroborating evidence. In an intense contest of wits Briers confronts the murderer, trying to gain a confession of what he knows to be true. One of the more unique aspects of this novel is that the murderer is found but not jailed for lack of the necessary confession.

Snow's theme, a Proustian awareness of underlying decadence, is present in all of his characterizations and gives the novel its homogeneity. The background of a decadent English dis- tract reinforces, and the brutal murder highlights, this theme. And what is most telling is that no one is tried for the murder: justice is not satisfied, the decadence goes on. The coat of varnish remains intact.

by Alex Perry

## KURT VONNEGUT

*Jailbird*  
Delacourte \$9.95

Just when we thought we had heard all there was to hear about Watergate, Kurt Vonnegut introduces a new character into the scenario. *Jailbird* is the story of Walter F. Starbuck, the president's special advisor on youth affairs during part of the Nixon administration. The Federal Minimum Security Adult Correctional Facility was the prison in which Starbuck spent three years for his role in the Watergate fiasco. *Jailbird* depicts the story of Starbuck realistically; it is only the pessimism and defeatist attitude that inform the reader that he is not reading the memoirs of one of the infamous.

But no one could have become a part of the most powerful political machine of this century the way Walter F. Starbuck did: he became a Nixon appointee in 1970 after Nixon had questioned him in 1949 at a House of Representatives hearing about his previous associations with communists and his loyalty to the United States. During his testimony, which was aired over national radio, Starbuck did the one thing he could never forgive himself for: betraying a friend. Though Leland Cleves was never Starbuck's best friend, he was ruined by the testimony. "Starbuck and Cleves" became a familiar phrase, and Nixon remembered Starbuck twenty years later.

Vonnegut's pessimism is blatant through the realistic first half of the novel:

So my idealism [that one day there will be one big, happy and peaceful family on Earth—the Family of Man] did not die even in the Nixon White House, did not die even in prison....

I still believe that peace and plenty and happiness can be worked out some way. I am a fool.

The years are not only important to Starbuck's life, they are characters in his life that play a more important role than people do. He is a pawn to the years and to what time and history offer him; Starbuck does nothing for himself his entire life, takes no aggressive action. Two years after the hearing Cleves is found guilty of perjury and Starbuck finds himself without a job. Employment has been a sort of Virginia reel to Starbuck with friends handing him from job to job; now everyone has quit the dance. "Vacancies had become as extinct as dodo birds." The sad thing is, Starbuck cannot figure out why he is unable to find a job. Timothy Beane, the active head of Beane, Mearns, Weld and Weld, Washington's most prestigious law firm, tells him:

You are another nincompoop, who, by being at the wrong place at the wrong time...was able to set humanitarianism back a full century! Begone!

The novel changes midway through, becoming optimistic but sacrificing the realism. Starbuck serves his years in prison, and on his first day of freedom he runs into Leland Cleves on a street corner in New York City. In another coincidence at the same time, he meets a fat, ugly shopping-bag lady who was the first woman Starbuck had ever made love with. This shopping-bag lady plays a prominent role in his life. She tells him: "Life goes on, yes—and a fool and his self-respect are soon parted, perhaps never to be reunited even on Judgment Day."

Tom Lewis

## HUNTER S. THOMPSON

### *The Great Shark Hunt*

Random House

\$15 Hardback, \$7.95 Paperback

He started out a respectable jour-

nalist, with a wife and a kid. After some insubordination in the Air Force, he was a sports writer in Florida, then served a stint in South America as correspondent for the *National Observer*. Then some freelancing.

But as he said himself, "when the going gets weird, the weird turn pro." And the times were weird as he rode with the Hell's Angels for his first book, "a strange and terrible saga." He was the first to kick Dick Nixon around in national print, calling him "a Fascist pig." He got carried away by the image of the hard-drinking journalist and began muttering in his articles about Wild Turkey and MDA. In the paranoia of the Nixon regime, he split his personality into the mythical Raoul Duke, whose depraved exploits provided Garry Trudeau the weird material for "Duke" in the comic strip "Doonesbury."

In the meantime, the original half of this personality, Hunter S. Thompson, had proclaimed himself a Doctor of Journalism, and matched Woodward and Bernstein's place in the history of the American press as the creator of Gonzo Journalism.

Thompson's fourth book, *The Great Shark Hunt: Gonzo Papers, vol. 1*, is a collection of forty-six pieces from different phases in his journalist career, ranging from his Air Force discharge papers to his interview with Muhammed Ali. The book chronicles the evolution of a writer's style from the straight reportage of the South American scene to the paranoid ravings of a drug-addled mind, full of fear and loathing during "the foul years of Nixon."

Thompson never was a good reporter in the way of objectivity. The Air Force discharge mentions his penchant for wild exaggeration and unfounded innuendo, but also his outstanding talent for writing with flair. This subjectivity would form the basis of Gonzo Journalism.

In the jacket copy of *Fear & Loathing in Las Vegas: A Savage Journey to the Heart of the American Dream*, Thompson defines his style. Quoting Faulkner's idea that good fiction is far more true than reporting, he continues: "Which is not to say that Fic-



tion is 'more true' than Journalism—or vice versa—but that both 'fiction' and 'journalism' are artificial categories; and that both forms, at their best, are only two different means to the same end. This is getting pretty heavy...."

Thompson's Gonzo Journalism goes beyond Tom Wolfe's New Journalism, in that Thompson projects himself into the scene he is reporting. His persona as a depraved, drug-crazed, semi-criminal paranoid is fictional or exaggerated, at best. But whether or not we believe that Thompson drove down to Las Vegas with a "serious drug collection" in the trunk of a rented convertible—"two bags of grass, seventy-five pellets of mescaline, five sheets of high powered blotter acid, a salt shaker half full of cocaine, and a whole galaxy of multicolored uppers, downers, screamers, laughers... and also a quart of tequila, a quart of rum, a case of Budweiser, a pint of raw ether and two dozen amyls"—we go along for the ride into the sewer system of America.

His Gonzo style first appeared in print when *Playboy* would not publish his commissioned piece on Jean-Claude Killy selling cars for Chevrolet. For revenge, Thompson rewrote the article, including his hassle with *Playboy*, and sold it to another magazine. The weird writer standing around at press conferences with a beer can in one hand appeared.

Thompson is a reporter of the milieu; he gives us the feel, if not the facts. Even in his *National Observer* days he could write vivid evocations. In the short piece "What Lured Hemingway to Ketchum," Thompson writes movingly of that pathetic giant in modern fiction. We get the feel, the pathos, of Hemingway's last days, and far more of a sense of the man's art than massive biographies or scholarly dissections offer.

Adopting his weird persona, Thompson gives a special bent to the field of sportswriting too long dominated by the taxidermic likes of Red Smith. "Fear & Loathing at the Super Bowl" is an account of the spectators sporting and not the predictable business on the field.

"The Kentucky Derby is Decadent and Depraved" is more a social commentary than a sports account. This article is a fine example of Gonzo reportage. Thompson even finds a Hogarth to illustrate his particular perverse humor in the Englishman Ralph Steadman, who mutters "teddible, teddible" as he sketches Francis Bacon-like portraits of spectators in the press box, drunk and throwing up on each other's shoes.

From sportswriting, Thompson moved into political reporting. He ran for sheriff of Aspen, Colorado, where he resides, listening to Jefferson Airplane's "White Rabbit" as the sun rises over the Rockies, and then basking in the sun stone naked. His political campaign was "Freak Power" with a logo of a double-thumbed fist clutching a peyote button. By dragging longhairs out of bars to vote, Thompson destroyed the local power structure.

As National Affairs Editor for *Rolling Stone*, Thompson covered the artificial whirlwind of American politics, following the campaign trails with fear and loathing in '68, '72, and then in 1976 with Jimmy Carter and The Great Leap of Faith. His nightmare vision astutely captured America's "national nightmare" during the Watergate hearings.

Richard Milhous Nixon occupies a special place as a satanic figure in Hunter Thompson's private mythology. Long before the rest of the press followed suit, Thompson looked deep down into Nixon and saw that he was shallow. In articles not even pertaining to politics, Thompson will go on for pages on Nixon, with adjectives from "punk" and "hoodlum" to those bordering on the profanely libelous. But his Gonzo Journalism evokes the mood of the times, with everyman alone, watching his country fall to pieces around him.

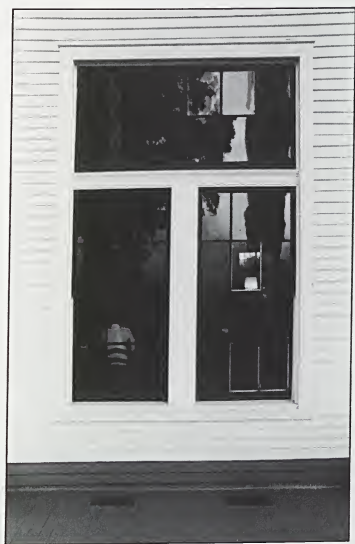
After the demise of Nixon and after the schizophrenic legend of Raoul Duke/ Dr. Hunter S. Thompson has been financially established, his writing begins to suffer in later selections of the book. Like some writers, Thompson begins to parody himself and a few pieces resemble the gibberish Thompson is always talking about.

*The Great Shark Hunt* can be read and enjoyed on several levels. There's always the outrageous comic strip Duke muttering about Macing waiters in a Louisville restaurant. Or Hunter S. Thompson, Doctor of Journalism perfecting a style of impressionistic reporting "more true" than most news accounts adhering to the five-Ws rule.

The book, subtitled "Strange Tales from a Strange Time," accurately reports the irrationality that was the Sixties.

by G. Dale Neal









# *The Student*

Spring 1980







# *The Student*

WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY • WINSTON-SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA • SPRING 1980

## EDITOR

Paula A. Dale

## ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Evelyn Byrd Tribble

## ASSISTANT EDITORS

Edward Allen  
Erin E. Campbell  
James Gurley

## ART EDITOR

Julie Doub

## ASSISTANT POETRY EDITOR

Kenneth Prichard

## STAFF

Denise Cumbee  
Eva Curlee  
Lisa Ferguson  
Elizabeth Hamrick  
Susan Rogers  
Marty Rowden  
Elizabeth Stephens  
Jackie Werth

## ADVISORS

Lee Potter  
Bynum Shaw

Special thanks to Beth Tartan, Betty Leighton, Stuart Wright, Bill Moss, Elizabeth Phillips, John Via, Edna Cherry, Kirk McCombs, Lauren Doyle-McCombs, and Taylor Dancy.

Our deepest appreciation to Mary Lee Settle for the interview and for permission to reprint the excerpts from her acceptance speech for the 1978 National Book Award and from her novel *Scapegoat*.

The *Student* also wishes to thank the readers and contributors to the Sherlock Holmes Marathon.

## PHOTO & ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

The cover and front and back inside covers are by Stephen Tippie.

Bill Boyarsky p. 16  
Cliff Britt p. 11  
Denise Cumbee p. 24  
Taylor Dancy pp. 17, 38, 43, 45  
Susan Darnell p. 59  
Julie Doub p. 2  
Lauren Doyle-McCombs p. 60  
Lisa Smith pp. 31, 34, 36  
Mark Warren pp. 5, 50, 51, 52, 54, 55, 56

## APOLOGIA:

The review of C. P. Snow's *A Coat of Varnish* in the second issue was by Alan Spiegler.

The cover and inside back photo of the second issue were by Stephen Tippie. The inside front cover was by Randy Stolz.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

©1980 by The Student. All rights reserved.

No part of this magazine may be reproduced in any form without permission.

## THE SOUTH

- |                    |    |                                                                                                                                           |
|--------------------|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Denise Cumbee      | 16 | It Don't Come Easy: A Brief History of the Blues Filling an Empty Room—The Art of Mary Lee Settle Excerpts from <i>Scapegoat</i> McDibb's |
| G. Dale Neal       | 18 |                                                                                                                                           |
| Mary Lee Settle    | 22 |                                                                                                                                           |
| Kenneth Prichard   | 25 |                                                                                                                                           |
| Tom Albritton      |    |                                                                                                                                           |
| Elisabeth Stephens | 26 | A Compendium of Southern Cooking Is Regional Writing Dead? Nine Authors and Editors Reply                                                 |
|                    | 29 |                                                                                                                                           |

## ARTICLES

- |                 |    |                                                         |
|-----------------|----|---------------------------------------------------------|
| Mary Nash Kelly | 8  | The Draft: Democratic Obligation or Inequitable Burden? |
| Jim Wheaton     | 47 | The Music Wing: When?                                   |
| Missy Ginter    | 50 | From Innocence to Experience: A Journey With Knowledge  |

## FICTION

- |                      |    |                    |
|----------------------|----|--------------------|
| Erin E. Campbell     | 2  | Darkening Muses    |
| David Brian Marshall | 12 | The Statement      |
| G. Dale Neal         | 38 | American Melodrama |

## POETRY

- |                      |    |                                        |
|----------------------|----|----------------------------------------|
| Evelyn Byrd Tribble  | 6  | Spondaic Dimeter at the Tangerine Bowl |
| B. Keith Curran      |    | Faces                                  |
| Anonymous            | 7  | Untitled                               |
| Erin E. Campbell     |    | Given a Perpendicular                  |
| Lisa DeMaio          |    | Innocents                              |
| Catherine Burroughs  | 11 | The Piano Lesson                       |
| Susan Rogers         | 15 | I & II                                 |
| Beth Boone           | 37 | Figure Study                           |
| Stephen M. Amidon    | 46 | Rome                                   |
| Jackie Werth         | 48 | There and Beyond                       |
| David Brian Marshall | 49 | Air                                    |
| Mary Boone           |    | Soap                                   |
| David Brian Marshall | 57 | First Memory                           |
| Kathy A. Clay        | 58 | My Lover is a Verb                     |
| Birney Bull          |    | Where Do They Keep the Church?         |
| Susan Rogers         | 60 | Catch                                  |
| Evelyn Byrd Tribble  | 64 | Hobby                                  |

## BOOKCASE

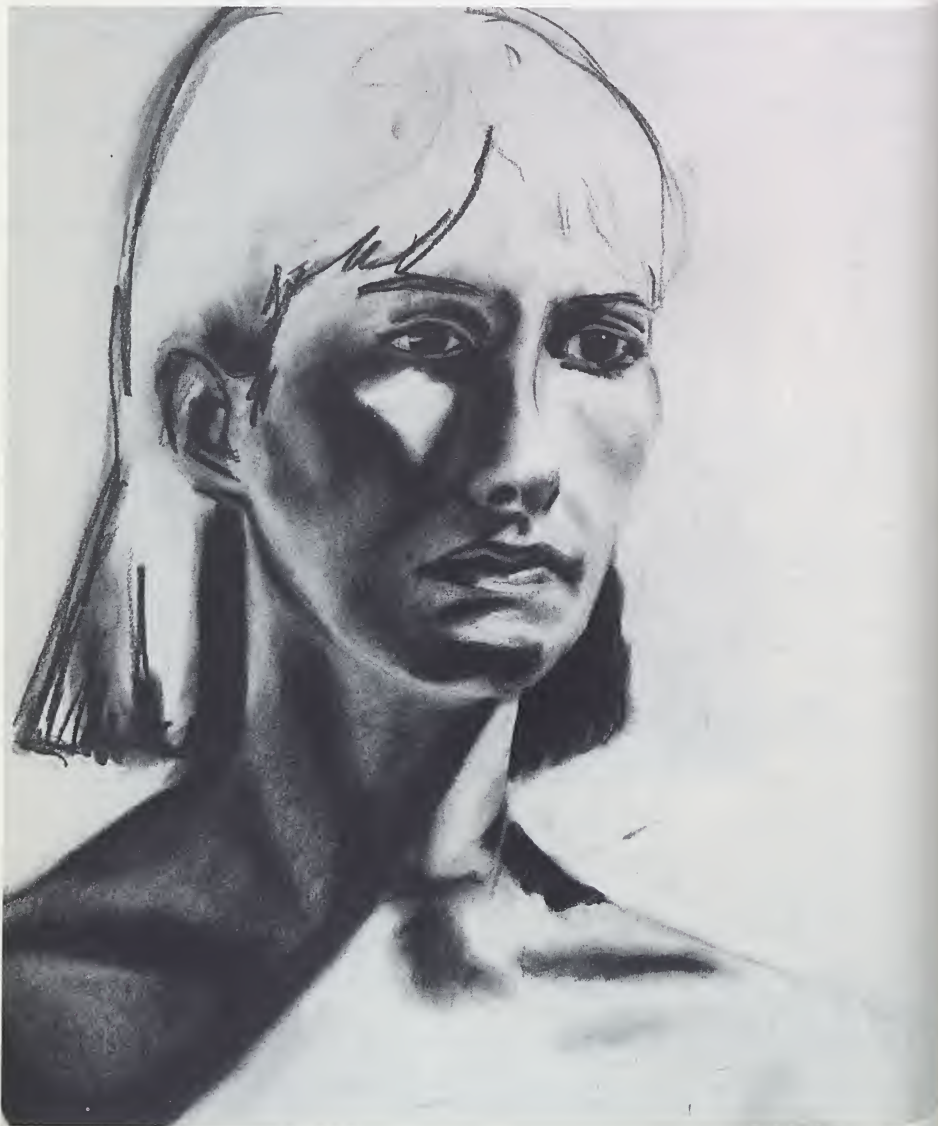
- |                      |    |                                                                                  |
|----------------------|----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Evelyn Byrd Tribble  | 61 | Doris Lessing: <i>Shikasta</i>                                                   |
| Stephen M. Amidon    |    | Thomas Kinsella: <i>Peppercanister Poems</i>                                     |
| Lisa Ferguson        | 63 | Fred Harwell: <i>A True Deliverance: The Joan Little Case</i>                    |
| Lauren Doyle-McCombs |    | Elizabeth Phillips: <i>Edgar Allan Poe: An American Imagination—Three Essays</i> |

The *Student* is published three times per academic year by the students of Wake Forest University with funds provided by the university. It is a non-profit organization existing by and for the Wake Forest community. Manuscripts and suggestions may be brought by our office in room 224, Reynolda Hall, or mailed to Box 7247, Reynolda Station, Winston-Salem, N.C. 27109. Opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect those of the editors. The *Student* is printed by the Winston Printing Company.



# Darkening Muses

by Erin E. Campbell



Julie Doub

Of course, Richard was late, so I sat alone on the patio of the Dockside, feeling foolish and making my drink—now mostly half-melted ice—last as long as possible. There was nothing to do but watch the red and white lights from the passing boats shatter into fragments on the inky water of the marina. Most of them were sailing back to the pier since the fog was starting to roll in. I envied the laughter and casual conversations at the tables around me. Good-byes always seemed such a depressing burden.

"Congratulate me!" came a familiar voice neither too soft nor too loud. Richard was sitting across from me, the light from the table candle sparking in his gray eyes. He wore his wolfish grin, but it soon slid away as he began stroking his brown Hapsburg beard.

"It's final?" I asked, trying not to seem startled. "You're definitely not with BTP anymore?"

"My contract with Brewster Theatre Productions has been officially terminated by 'mutual consent,'" he stated victoriously. "Of course, just as soon as everything was finalized, good ol' Edmund B. grew quite solicitous—said his 'little family' would be incomplete with my leaving the nest, but he assured me they would somehow manage without me. Then..."

"Would you care for a drink?" interrupted the waitress.

While twirling the ends of his mustache, he said, "I'll have,"—every time, it was always the same—"a brandy."

"I'll have another," I said when she looked at me.

"Well," Richard resumed, raising one eyebrow and faintly curling the corners of his mouth upward, "I told him exactly what I thought of his operation. I told him if everyone else wanted to kiss his ass—and they all do, you know, every last one of them—to get half-way decent parts that was their business, but by God, I wasn't going to play up to him. I figured I could go somewhere else to get the same half-rate roles he's been handing me, and at least have some self-respect as well."

Seeing my look of incredulosity, he continued with less indignation, "It's not just that. It's the way a lot of things, important things, are handled. Most of the time he refuses to put on works with any real amount of aestheticism or sophistication. 'The audience,' he says, 'comes to be entertained, not to think.' And then," his vehemence was returning, "he debauches what plays he does run by using such shoddy props and costumes. I mean, my God, you're never, never going to achieve genuine artistic quality if you're going to be half-assed about it."

"There hasn't been much of a budget to work with," I remarked quietly. "Brewster just had to lay off two prop men."

Richard sighed and refused to say any more, sulking because I had not upheld his argument. Finally I said,

"It's a shame that you're leaving now since you've really just started getting established here. It seems like you could have come to some compromise."

"Oh, I compromised all right..." Richard watched the lights moving across the water. After a few seconds, his stare became fixed as though he had been hypnotized by them.

The lights nearly blinded him, and it was only when he bowed very low beneath their luminous path that he could see the source of the applause that enveloped him. At that moment it seemed that the world sat before him, and he felt exalted. When the curtain descended for the last time, Richard, still giddy, stood motionlessly with his eyes closed, his face beaming.

An actress from the end of the cast line raced to where he stood and embraced him. "You were fabulous, Richard. I honestly think you were even better than Lewis. The audience loved you. God, I can't believe how well you did—your first time as stand-in."

"Oh, Brenda," he exclaimed, half laughing, "I think this will finally give me a chance to stop just being somebody's understudy. Things are going to change, you'll see."

"You did a damned good job, Richard," Edmund Brewster told him later. "Lewis should be able to go back on stage tomorrow though. But I promise you, son, I'm not going to waste your talent. You just wait."

For two years Richard waited for a promise never more than half-fulfilled.

His trance was broken when the waitress arrived with the drinks.

"Well," he said, raising his glass and smiling sardonically, "Here's good riddance to BTP and to Southern Cal."

I joined in the toast, but not empathetically. After he downed half his brandy in one gulp, I said, "You're not staying around here at all?"

Richard sighed, then paused for a moment. "No, the theatre here simply is not what it ought to be. I mean, everytime they cultivate a really fine stage actor, Hollywood immediately snatches him up. Face it, the movie makers have infinitely more money to offer. It'll always be like that around here, and nobody's ever going to change it. But I absolutely refuse to prostitute my talent by going into films. I'm convinced they'll never have the finesse of the true stage."

"So what'll you do now?" I asked, watching him throw the last of his drink down his throat.

He replied, looking as though he were suddenly afflicted with some painful ailment, "I'm going back to New York."

I smiled and laughed, "I thought you came here to get away from New York."

Richard looked completely embarrassed, so I offered him a cigarette while getting one for myself. With short, staccatoed movements, he took one and offered a light in return. He ordered another brandy, and it wasn't until he had exhaled his first smoke-filled breath that he



answered.

"I thought I could at least get away from the dirty streets and cold weather in New York, but here the streets are scorching and the air is filthy. So I suppose it's simply one misery for another."

"You just have to get used to it—at least I had to."

"Why did you come out West anyway?"

"Same reason you did; I wasn't as lucky though. I wanted to act, but after a few parts in a professional setting—it just isn't like it was in our school plays—I simply couldn't hack it. I was too mediocre. But I love the theatre, so I stayed. Brewster gave me my job as a stage hand. He's pretty demanding at times, but he's good."

After we got a third round Richard flicked his cigarette into the water and sat silently with his arms folded across his chest. The corners of his mouth were pinched, and his lower lip jutted slightly forward so that he looked like a pouting bearded child. He gazed over my shoulder, but there was little left to be seen since the fog had already begun creeping inland. He was waiting for me to say something.

"What about Brenda? Is she going with you?"

"No," he said curtly, his jaws immediately snapping shut.

"But I figured. . . ."

"I figured too," he muttered in an injured tone and cast his gray eyes downward. Then he began drumming his fingernails on the table to fill the uneasy silence.

"Now, Richard, don't get me upset right now. You know I have to go on soon," said the half-made-up face from the mirror. She began etching the eyeliner on the rims of her lids, then she stopped abruptly. "Would you turn that light on over there? I can't even see enough to work."

"Now that's exactly what I mean!" He violently flipped the light switch on. "They don't even have the decency to replace burned-out bulbs. And look at this dressing room! It's too small, and it's dirty, and. . . ."

"It's not that big a hardship, Richard. I don't understand why you have to make such a big deal out of it. After all. . . ."

The door flew open, and a woman in full stage makeup and costume burst into the room. Undressing as she went, the actress marched to a clothes rack at the back. Richard squeezed against the wall to make enough room for her to pass.

"Jesus!" she exclaimed, flinging the dress she had been wearing to the floor. "I don't know why the hell Ed waits until now to tell me he wants me to wear the lavender

dress instead of the blue one. I'll have to change my eyeshade too. Argh!"

Richard continued, ignoring the intrusion. "Brenda, can't understand how you can actually abide all this. Why won't you go back with me to New York? You still have lots of friends there, so it's not like you're going to be with complete strangers."

She sighed deeply, then faced him. "We've been over all this. I'm not going to move around anymore, Richard. It won't accomplish anything. If I go back, things won't really be any better or worse, just different. If you want to, Richard, go—but without me."

His countenance a mixture of pleading and defiance. Richard stared at her for nearly a full minute, hoping for a conversion in her, but she remained unmoved.

"Well, I'll tell you one thing," he jeered, "you're never going to put an end to all this crap they hand out to you if you keep putting up with it."

Richard had left before she could say anything.

"Are you an actor? Did you just play in 'The Sun Comes Down'?" said a middle-aged man, obviously a tourist, who was passing our table.

"Yes, on both counts." Richard unsteadily rose to his feet, clutching the back of his chair for support.

"I and my wife here saw it last week. We really liked it—especially you. And. . . ."

"You see, my friend, what my life's work amounts to," Richard said disgustedly after the stranger, having extended his trite praises, had gone. "Retching out my soul for people who can't so much as remember 'The Sun Comes Down'; it does not *come* down. My God, when I die, they'll probably put the wrong name on my tombstone."

"We all have our special concerns, I suppose," I said. Then after a clumsy silence, "I'll miss you, Richard."

"I expect you're the only one," he replied, trying to smile. From his pockets he took a pen and his wallet. He put a twenty-dollar bill under his glass in place of the napkin on which he began scrawling. Then Richard handed the flimsy paper to me, saying, "That's my new address if you want to write sometime. I'd better go, I'm supposed to leave early in the morning. Thanks a lot for everything. See ya."

He rose and walked away.

"Good luck!" I called to him as he disappeared into the fog after only a few steps. I examined the napkin by the light of the candle and discovered the handwriting was completely illegible. It didn't seem to matter much though. I knew I wouldn't have needed it very long anyway.





## Spondaic Dimeter at the Tangerine Bowl

Lake Dot  
Ho-Jo  
Bee-Line  
Gate Four  
Half-Back  
Pop Corn  
Cold Beer  
Rah-Rah

*by Evelyn Byrd Tribble*

## Faces

The clouds were like a wind-carved Mount Rushmore  
only the faces were different  
and not so hard

*by B. Keith Curran*

Unlike most things that  
go bump in the night the fog is not  
one of them, for the fog when thick  
stirs like a frosty.mmmmmmmmmmm

Submitted anonymously

G  
I  
V  
E  
A PERPENDICULAR

Given: a line, on a verticle incline,  
Which was inclined to recline.  
Given to syntax, the order of the day,  
Knew it not whether to lie or to lay.  
Given: to recline is to lie,  
Yet to lie is to falsify.  
Given that it could, instead, lay,  
But might then be put in the family way,  
The upright line declined to recline.

## Innocents

You captured my heart  
And set it free  
In songs of youthful fantasy.

And if my dearest dreams come true,  
I shall grow young in love with you.

*by Lisa De Maio*

*by Erin E. Campbell*



# THE DRAFT:

## Democratic

## Obligation

### Mary Nash Kelly

In his State of the Union Address in January, 1980, President Carter announced his intention to ask Congress for appropriations to facilitate the registration of all nineteen and twenty-year-olds for the draft. The revitalization of the selective service system through the reinstatement of registration is an integral part of the American response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December.

The United States' response to this invasion focuses on building up military power in the Persian Gulf region and in defining our position in relation to the Soviet Union. This redefinition involves a number of steps, each designed to increase our strength and to demonstrate to the Soviet Union our willingness to take concrete steps to protect our interests. American foreign policy continues to endorse detenté, with the understanding that equal strength is an essential element in an effective detenté policy.

In a time when the scope and magnitude of nuclear weapons make nuclear war an irrational alternative, the strength of conventional forces is the basis of real military strength. The reinstatement of the registration for the draft would increase significantly the potential of our conventional forces, where manpower is the main ingredient. The proposed registration would make this necessary manpower available when it is needed, without the half to full-year lag required in a standby mobilization plan.

In international politics, each country's perception of the others' strength is often more significant than the

Only a short decade ago, millions crowded city streets in protest of a war which required the drafting into service of thousands of young Americans. In the 1980s America is again confronting a call for the military draft. National politicians are heralding the advent of a Cold War; in the same breath, American leaders are attempting to reiterate the reasons for the recovery of the military strength shelved by budget-conscious Congressmen several years ago. Surrounded by election year rhetoric, a move to the draft appears attractive, yet this shift should not be a reflexive reaction to a perceived threat of continued Soviet aggression. The military draft should be justified not only politically, but also morally. The patriotic suggestion of dutiful military service is less than convincing.

Both the critics of the existing volunteer army and the advocates of compulsory military service cite the high manpower costs of the volunteer force, and both fail to consider that monetary costs are not the sole costs incurred in military service. Nobel Prize laureate Milton Friedman noted:

The argument that a voluntary army would cost more simply involves a confusion of apparent with real cost. By this argument, the construction of the Great Pyramid with slave labor was a cheap project. The real cost of conscripting a soldier who would not ordinarily serve on present terms is not his pay and the cost of his keep. It is the amount for which

### Jim Wheaton

or

## Inequitable

## Burden

## Mary Nash Kelly

actual numerical data concerning military strength. This perception includes the nation's willingness to employ its resources. The registration for the draft would be a visible sign of support for the American government and an active statement of our willingness to support its decisions and take the necessary actions required to protect our interests. It would contribute to the overall display of increased strength and determination to demonstrate to the Soviets and the rest of the world the unacceptability of Soviet actions.

Any discussion of the draft or draft registration must include the question of the constitutionality and appropriateness of conscription in a democracy. The Constitution of the United States provides the government with the power to conscript citizens. In Article I, Section 8 the Constitution gives the legislature the power to "raise and support armies" and "to provide and maintain a navy." The Military Selective Service Act gives the President the authority to register, classify, and examine eighteen to twenty-six-year-old men. The registration of women will require extra approval from the Congress.

The draft is an appropriate extension of the government's charge to protect the rights of the citizens. A legitimate government in a democracy, according to both the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, must protect those rights for which our nation was established — life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. The argument that conscription denies a person his right to liberty and privacy overlooks the fact that the government's first charge is to protect the rights of all the citizens. This includes protection against foreign interference which would deny these rights. The personal freedom of an individual that is sacrificed in military service is counterbalanced by the preservation of the system whose fundamental reason for existence is the upholding of human rights.

A liberal democracy inherently demands that its citizens bear certain responsibilities in order to preserve the very existence of the system. These include paying taxes to support the government's programs and to insure civil order through a public safety force. Democracy requires that the citizen inform himself and vote in elections to choose those who will govern. In a national emergency, it requires that citizens go to war to fight for a system they believe to be right and good.

The registration proposed by the president involves the collection, through local post offices, of the names of all nineteen- and twenty-year-olds, and the continual registration of eighteen-year-olds beginning in 1981. Registration does not necessarily mean conscription — this

## Jim Wheaton

he would be willing to serve. He is paying the difference. This is the extra cost to him that must be added to the cost borne by the rest of us.

Thus, the cost of a drafted army is not only the wage cost of military labor, but also the costs of opportunities foregone by those forced into service.

Economically, the draft cannot be justified unless a military emergency exists. Economics does not claim without reason that a military draft is bad; economics suggests that America can simultaneously choose a strong military and an equitable military service. Admittedly, a major war might necessitate a draft, for wages demanded by potential volunteers would be far above the level able to be borne by society. Outside of this instance, a draft chooses at random a few from a large pool of young men. Those who are drafted lose their jobs and their educational opportunities, while those not selected face continuous uncertainty. Employers hesitate to hire eighteen-year-olds who might be drafted in two or three months. In the same manner, the youth of draft age fears the sudden loss of his job. The wage rate necessary to attract a sufficient volunteer force might be high, but certainly the cost is lower than that imposed by the draft. Can Americans continue to justify cuts in military wages and benefits in order to alleviate their tax burdens, and then turn

---

*"It is morally logical that society should bear the cost of its self-defense, rather than to impose the cost on a small segment of the population."*

---

to the draft as soon as recruitment falls?

The draft has patriotic appeal in the eyes of those who now formulate America's policies. Young men should fight for their country — if they want freedom, they must be willing to defend it. So the argument goes. Yet it is also reasonable to suggest that military service is not a necessary obligation in democratic societies. The very nature of a democracy calls for society to defend itself. In contrast to the social welfare argument of many political scientists, Kenneth Boulding hypothesizes that "the legitimacy of the draft is in a sense a subtraction from the



## Mary Nash Kelly

would require further appropriations from Congress. If used, the drafted forces would be designed to supplement the current volunteer forces.

A major change from earlier registration policies is the inclusion of women in the registration. Women should be included in the draft, primarily out of the consideration of equity — equal rights demand equal responsibilities. Women are currently prohibited by law from serving in combat positions, a restriction that would not be changed by the new law. Advancing technology in the military sphere has even opened many jobs to women which were formerly reserved to men. Registration of women would serve the same purpose as registration of men — it would

---

*"The draft is an appropriate extension of the government's charge to protect the rights of citizens."*

---

make the manpower available in such numbers and at such times as they could be employed effectively by the Department of Defense.

The success of any legitimate democratic system depends on the support of the citizens. The fundamental right is necessarily the right to survival, both of the system and of the citizens in it. As American citizens, we must be willing to serve the country in a time in which our national interests are threatened in order to insure the survival of the system. Since the invasion of Afghanistan, the motives of the Soviet Union have come under serious scrutiny. The administration's stance remains one of deterrence within detente. Increased military strength is the basis of this deterrence. This step to improve our military strength now and our capabilities in the future is the best insurance that the additional force will not be needed.

## Jim Wheaton

legitimacy of the state." It is morally logical that society should bear the cost of its self-defense, rather than to impose the cost on a small segment of the population.

Recent supporters of the draft cite figures on our comparative military weakness. It is difficult to question America's present military inadequacy, but can America find fault with youths who no longer choose military service? The overwhelming trend since the conclusion of the Vietnam War has been the rejection of the need for military superiority. Seven years after that conflict it is not even easy to assume that America has military parity with the Soviet Union. The Russian invasion of Afghanistan was not an unexpected move, neither was the military establishment astonished at the presence of Soviet combat troops in Cuba. Tragically, America is becoming a paper tiger. Delays and failures in the cruise missile project, cancellations of the B-1 bomber project, and the decision against the deployment of the neutron bomb are major outgrowths of an attitude which has prevailed for the past decade. Inflation soared to fourteen percent last year; military wages rose less than half that amount.

Before America asks sacrifices of a few of its men, it must demand sacrifices from all. If a stronger military is the price of freedom, as most recent political declarations have asserted, then that price should be paid with taxes of money, not discriminatory taxes of labor. Friedman points out, "One of the greatest advances in human freedom was the commutation of taxes in kind to taxes in money." It is not reasonable to advocate a peacetime draft mandated by America's careless attitudes of the 1970's.

*Mary Nash Kelly is a senior politics major; Jim Wheaton is a sophomore mathematical economics major. They presented their views on the draft at a forum held on February 20, 1980, in DeTamble Auditorium, prompted by President Carter's call for draft registration.*

## The Piano Lesson

Mrs. Knight bloomed like a lace waterfall  
and insisted the piano be set  
in the livingroom  
where she could instruct and regret.

She aimed more of what she said  
to the backyard goldenrods,  
restless like bohemian artists,  
headstrong as gods,

than to the stiff, young boys.  
They played badly and couldn't understand her pose:  
erect and pointed at the bay window  
like the carvings on ship bows.

She described the sound they should make  
with the metronome. Looking from her dock  
she rode the music, always  
listening for the clock.

For twenty minutes of each half hour  
she fashioned notes out of the leaves  
falling at random; random and minor  
mazurkas with a bass that grieves

and no student could play.  
She would sit, not to the backyard,  
and bite out songs bravely suffering,  
magnificent for their storms coming hard

against ship fronts. One song she composed  
when the goldenrods bent over  
and lay with the frost under wind.  
She feared it was forever.

*by Catherine Burroughs*



# THE STATEMENT

by David Brian Marshall

The librarian's ankles collapsed outward as she strode to the card catalogue, hooked her finger through one of the brass handles, and yanked the file drawer completely out. When the drawer lost contact with the cabinet, she was unable to hold the weight, and dropped it to the carpet. She paused momentarily, melodramatically, and then began to pull all the drawers out, one with each hand, and throw them behind her. By the time she had completed the "International Relations" section, she was panting, had broken one lens of her glasses and was wailing like a kicked dog. But none of the cards had fallen out yet. She surged toward the pile of drawers and began to rip the cards out and toss them over her head. At first she was meticulous about it, carefully tearing cards out one at a time. But she increased her pace as the head librarian, a student employee, and the janitor approached. She started to run . . . They tackled her just inside the doorway. She jumbled obscenities as they carried her out of the room.

Curtis read Emerson as Janet slept. Janet's upper body rested on her face, which had pitched forward into her spiral notebook. Her arms hung limply from the shoulders, straight down. She groaned as she woke.

She turned to Curtis and said, "What was that?"

"What was what?" Curtis asked. He stared at the spiral print that ran down the middle of Janet's face.

"That screaming racket—I thought I was dreaming."

Turning, she saw the remains of the librarian's mad attack and issued a quiet "Christ!" between her teeth.

"Look Curtis," said Janet, "Look at that mess. She must have gone crazy!"

"I've seen it and, what's more, I know the cause. I know what made her go crazy . . . I did."

Janet laughed.

Janet was not very attractive. Curtis knew that. In fact, he thought she might pass for the modern Gorgon. With

her explosively kinky bubble hair-do and her chronically bloated and flushed face, she always looked like she might be overheating. Curtis frequently asked her if she were hot, and opened the car windows wide, even in February. He hoped it might improve her looks. It never worked. But Curtis did not really care—he was not exactly handsome himself. He always pointed out that he had no scars on his face. What he did have, however, was a nearly terminal case of acne, which he attempted to cover with a beard. His beard matched his hair—curly, but thin and white blond. Curtis looked as if a ghostly white aura were hanging around his face.

Neither of them was deceived by the other's looks. They were ugly, and they were each other's first romantic interest. Janet was Curtis' first interest, period. He had spent three years at Overton without ever making a friend. He was doing quietly well and did not feel any need for companionship where the companion would be less than he wanted. He was simmering. When Curtis and Janet met, while filing cards in the card catalogue of the library, they kept their heads down, eyes forward and conversed in fervent whispers. Curtis was enthralled for the first time and did not care about appearance. The echoes of early morning in the library gave their whispers a breathless passion that discouraged eye-contact anyway.

After the librarian's attack, Curtis did not have a job in the library anymore. He missed work the morning after her "scene" and Janet could not find him at lunch. When she returned to her dorm, she found a note he had left on her door: "Meet me at the park at 2:00—Urgent." The park Curtis mentioned was a playground just off the other side of campus and it was already 2:10 so Janet slammed down her books and ran. Just as she was leaving the building, her roommate appeared.

"Have you heard about Curtis?" she yelled after Janet.

Curtis was waiting when Janet arrived. He was not annoyed. In fact, he was unusually happy, glowing with an uncharacteristic pride. He stood up to greet her.

"Well, have you heard?" he asked.

"No. Heard what?"

Janet looked hotter than usual. Curtis grabbed her by the arm and fanned her face with a newspaper he held in his hand.

"I've been kicked out of school!"

"You've whaaaa? You're kidding."

"No, look at this."

They sat down together on the bench. Curtis unfolded the paper and pointed to a small headline at the bottom of the front page, which read: "Overtown Student Dupes Library." Janet clasped her hands over her head theatrically.

"Curtis, what did you do?"

Curtis grabbed her hands one at a time, pulled them and pinned them in her lap. He hated her emotion. She shifted left and right on the bench.

"Will you settle down?" he screamed. "I'll tell you—just settle down. Okay? Take a deep breath... are you okay now?"

She settled, then nodded slowly.

"I filled the card catalogue with fake cards."

"You did what?" Janet said. She stood up abruptly and started to walk around the bench, nervously wringing her hands. Curtis grabbed her on the third revolution.

"I put over 30,000 fake cards in the card catalogue. I've been working on it since my freshman year. I've been making cards that long—I've been putting them in only the last two weeks. Last Friday I put the last 100 author cards in and then I sent a letter to Mrs. Shearin saying I wanted books by certain authors. When she checked the catalogue she found not ten, not twenty by these authors but somewhere around two hundred by or about each."

"How did they know you did it?" Janet shouted.

"Well, the authors' names were Abner Curtis, Curt Berne, Nathan Kurby and of course, the last one hundred I put in were by... Curtis Abernathy."

Janet sat still, her face more bloated and hot than Curtis had ever seen it. He shifted toward her and tried to cheer her up.

"And each card has complete title, subject, added entry, and second subject equivalents!"

Janet looked as if she had just learned a close relative had died. She continued to look that way for twenty minutes.

That afternoon, Curtis had an appointment with the president of the university. When Curtis entered the president's office, he found the president standing in front of his desk and leaning over from the waist, apparently trying to pick a piece of paper up from the floor. Curtis approached with his hand instinctively outstretched, but the president continued to grope for the paper, losing his glasses and his balance in the process. The president teetered around momentarily and when he

turned around to take the paper from the other side, his jacket back flipped down over his shoulders and head. The president spun around like a demented ballerina for quite some time before Curtis bent down and picked up the glasses and the sheet of paper, helping the president to rightness.

"Thanks son... did you wish to speak to me?" the president bellowed.

"I'm Curtis Abernathy si—" he stopped himself.

"Curtis Abernathy, yes—You're the boy who played that trick on Mrs. Shearin and pushed her over the deep end! You wrote all those phoney books! You used your job to ruin our—"

"I think you've identified me," Curtis interrupted. He walked over to the president's chair and, on impulse, dropped into it.

"Get up, get up! I'll have some answers from you. I will not tolerate rudeness!" he gasped for air.

"Y'know you are such a stereotype. You are exactly what I'd expect to see in a Jerry Lewis movie. How did you get this job—your father?"

The president grabbed Curtis by the arm, lifting him out of the chair, turning him and pinning him against the desk. At first he just stared at Curtis, breathing coffee breath on him and grimacing. But soon the president backed away, straightened himself and cleared his throat. Curtis shook his head.

The president calmly asked, "I am just trying to find out, son, why are you so bent on self-oblivion?"

"Self-oblivion?" Curtis said, "What the hell does that mean? 'Self-oblivion,' where'd you learn that term? What does it mean? Let's see, 'self' that's me, now 'oblivion' is like forgetfulness. 'Self-oblivion' would be a completely forgotten self. What does a completely forgotten self look like? Is it just a pile of clothes on top of a pair of tennis shoes? People would stand around and say, 'Where'd he go?' and another person would say, 'Oh, he must have completely forgotten himself.' Meanwhile I'd be off somewhere bumping into walls and shit, right?"

The president convinced himself he was still in control and said, "I'm just trying to find out where you're coming from."

Curtis walked around the president and asked, "Is that all you have to say—psychobabble? How trite, how unoriginal, how disappointing!"

"Why did you do it?" the president begged.

"I'll tell you why. Because when you asked me why the first answer that came into my head was, 'Because it was there.' And, y'know that is a pretty stupid thing to say. It is so trite. But it is a symptom of living in this mindless T.V. mentality institution. But I've had it with cliches. I've been here four years and you ask why!"

Curtis walked out. The president called after him, but Curtis did not turn around.

The president sent his eighty-year-old secretary after him. Curtis pushed her down as he stepped into the elevator muttering, "Turd-droppers."



PS3507

N6

c.2

1958

WEAPONARY -- MEDIEVAL: ADDRESSES,  
ESSAYS, LECTURES

Twenty-Third Conference on the spoiled grape-  
fruit as a crippling projectile. Held in Lusaka,  
Zambia, March, 1963.

Abner Curtis, Death Fruit: The True Cause of  
Harold of Hastings' Demise. Blemish, Iowa. Uni-  
versity of Blemish Press [c 1958]  
33.5 pp.

When Curtis arrived at his dorm a couple of hours later, he stepped into a room filled with overlapping choruses of "For He's A Jolly Good Fellow." Curtis tried to walk past them to his hall, but two of his suite-mates stopped him.

"Curt, baby, good work!" one shouted into his ear.

The other threw his arm around Curtis and said, "Hey, we're going to make you our honorary fraternity brother!"

Curtis pantomimed vomiting on his new brother's chest. Someone Curtis had never seen before stepped out of the crowd and onto a chair. Curtis started to say that if he wanted to talk to him, he did not have to get on a chair. But the others shushed Curtis.

"Curtis, buddy, we just want you to know that we think what you did was great and that you really show'd 'em. The guys and I went down to the library and tore out all your cards we could find and, well, I for one would like your autograph!"

After the ransom of autographs was paid, Curtis stayed in the dorm only as long as he had to—one additional hour spent packing his gear and telling twenty of his honorary brothers how he had planned and executed the "single greatest event of their college career." They helped Curtis carry his trunks down to the taxi.

Someone tried to get into the taxi with him, pushing Curtis into the cab and saying, "Let's go down to the library—John and Greg are getting together a game of soccer in the reading room with the globe! Paul has been circling Mrs. Shearin's house all night—"

Curtis put his foot into the boy's chest and pushed off. The cab raced away. On the way to the train station, they picked up Janet, who was waiting outside with a small suitcase.

"I thought you'd come by," she said as she climbed into the car.

"Yeah, well..." Curtis replied. They sat far apart. They said nothing. Curtis rolled down both back windows.

Curtis pointed to her nightcase and asked, "What are you going to do with that?"

"I'm going with you."

"Oh no, not you too!" He began to search under the front seat, on the floor, on the back seat. "Where is it?" he screamed.

"Where's what?"

"The script," he said. "Where is the script all this bull comes out of? What a world of stereotypes, cliches and trite responses. This is such a one-dimensional world. No creativity! I've had it! Even you!"

Janet started to whimper. Curtis picked up her nightcase and tossed it out the window. They gravitated to opposite sides of the back seat and became silent.

"I should have taken plan A. I should have murdered the president. I had it all planned—I was going to staple his lips to the wall and staple his nostrils closed. He'd have suffocated."

Janet wiped her eyes and started to chuckle lightly. Curtis, who had been pulling nervously on the seat belt, adjusting and readjusting it, reached over to Janet and grasped her hand.

"I'm sorry," Curtis said, "I should not have..." I guess I..."

"Go on," Janet said, holding his hand in both of her hands.

"That's just it. I can't go on like this... Aaaaargh! Another cliché!"

"It's catching," she said.

Curtis played with his beard and said, "Still, I did it. I wanted the most bizarre, perfectly unmotivated act and I did it. It was not the stereotype even if all I inspired was stereotypic responses. I broke free."

"You're free," Janet echoed.

He nodded.

Janet said, "Where will you go now? . . . Ooops, I'm sorry, a cliché! I meant to say, 'Will you sell water buffaloes now?'"

He laughed and replied, "No, I'll live off this for a while, then I'll do a world speaking tour with a pair of underwear over my head."

"Good idea."

The taxi approached the train station. Curtis got out, helped the driver put his gear on the sidewalk. Janet stayed in the car. Curtis paid the cabby, closed the back door, and, reaching his hand into his pocket, produced a card which he threw into the cab as the driver pulled away. The card read:

## HALITOSIS, VEGETIVE—BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Abernathy, Curtis

Pumpkin Breath: The Causes, The Effect, The Prevention.

An annotated bibliography of articles dealing with mouth stench. New York, New York Personal Press [c1901-rare]

10,988 pp. inscribed: "To Janet"

Janet read the card and then looked up, saying, "Driver, where were we when he threw my bag out the window?"

"I don't know."

"Forget it," Janet said. "Just drive me back to campus."

## I.

Almost rain, seven a.m.;  
a Sunday fog walls us in.  
You told me once of two rooms in rain:  
we're in one, with our umbrella,  
those without, outside.  
Another room, this fog.

## II.

Wrapped in thin white sheets, we are  
stacked like Chinese boxes.  
Unwrapped,  
the first box, then the second,  
slowly getting closer, but  
today seals us in a frosted glass box.

*by Susan Rogers*



*The blues is a lowdown  
achin' heart disease,  
The blues is a lowdown  
achin' heart disease,  
It's like consumption, killin'  
you by degrees,*

So run the lyrics of one of the most widespread blues verses born in America, expressing by its very universality the nature of this traditional black folk-style. Musicologist Henry Edward Krehbiel defined folk song as "the song created by the people . . . which has come into existence without the influence of conscious art, as a spontaneous utterance, filled with characteristics of rhythm, form and melody . . . Some of these elements, the spiritual, are elusive . . ."

Perhaps it is these elusive, spiritual elements which twist at the heart when listening to a blues singer—the feeling that one is hearing the raw human condition cried out in lyrics burnt down to the essential personal situation. As the songs of the working class, the blues give voice to the physical and emotional events of everyday life raised unconsciously to art form by their profound and experiential intensity of expression. As one old slave-woman said of her favorite work song in antebellum days, "It can't be sung without a full heart and a troubled spirit."

One can, in fact, trace earlier folk-song influences on the blues back to the work songs, ballads, and spirituals of the plantation era, although the blues as a form with its own character did not exist in slavery. In post-Civil War years, group work songs largely disappeared except for those originating among the work gangs of the Southern penitentiaries which retained the traditional leader-chorus form. This style, along with the cottonfield "hollers" of the individual worker, became constituents of the modern blues. However, it was the period of economic and political stress which took place at the end of the century that became the birth-time for a new musical response to social upheaval. Isolated by segregation and

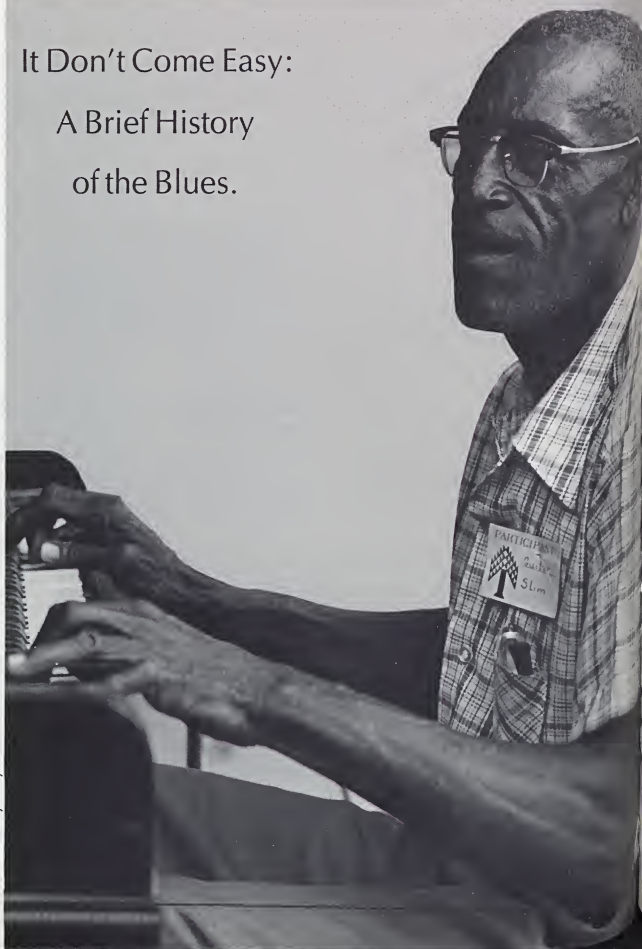
restrictive legislation from the white man's culture, the black man was impressed by a sense of his own identity and culture in a new, more militant way. An aggressive spirit gave rise to different art forms: the gospel song of the emerging Pentecostal sect, the piano syncopations of Joplin's ragtime, the improvisation of New Orleans jazz, and the narrative black ballad. It was also the era which inspired the unique twelve-bar, three-line stanza of the blues form.

The Piedmont style of black folk music in North Carolina originated, perhaps, at the turn of the century in the tobacco belt where music was a part of life—at gatherings, corn

shuckings, barn raisings, dances, or just back-porch guitar-pickings. Music was played by ear, with songs and techniques learned from family and friends and played on any borrowed or improvised instrument which would keep a rhythm, be it piano, guitar, ukelele, banjo, harmonica, washboard, or a pair of "bones."

With an increase of industrial growth in North Carolina (as in the rest of the South), blacks migrated to new urban areas seeking work. Work, however, was often not easy to find, and when the Depression struck, many transplanted rural blacks were forced to gain part of their living in the city through music. Blind singers

## It Don't Come Easy: A Brief History of the Blues.



Bill Boyarsky



were of singular importance to the formation of the blues during the thirties and forties, as they staked their entire livelihood on the reception their music received and consequently were very influential in these decades marking the peak of the blues era. Names like Blind Gary Davis, Blind Boy Fuller, and Sonny Terry became well-known in blues circles of North Carolina.

Throughout this period, blues remained an intensely personal, yet aggressively social music. House parties were popular where the liquor flowed freely, and gambling was accompanied by bluesmen sweating furiously at the piano or finger-picking a guitar. Frequently, someone would break into a lively buckdance in time to some of the faster rags. The entertainment was spirited and strenuous, and the blues musician could count on some appreciative coins.

Tobacco warehouses also provided a place for growth of the blues style. White and black farmers alike would assemble to auction tobacco and while waiting for the highest bidder were glad to give good tips to bluesmen who played and sang away the idle hours. In North Carolina cities with larger black communities, such as Durham and Winston-Salem, musicians could also gain good money by playing in the streets on warm, summer evenings.

Recent years have seen a dying out of the pure blues style, although interest in the traditional folk form is just beginning to be revived again. The Office of Folklife Programs in Raleigh has done much to bring North Carolina blues history and musicians out of obscurity. Many bluesmen of the early years have died, but there are still those around who remember and play the sounds of the old days, and there are younger sons and daughters who carry on a musical inheritance. How do you learn to play the blues? "That's something you understand better than you know," explains 'Guitar Slim' Stephens, 64, of Greensboro. "The blues stands more proper than anything in God's world." Guitar Slim can rock a piano with

"Love Me Blues" or make a guitar wail with the throaty lyrics,

I hear that freight train coming now, baby, coming down the line.

Yeah, I hear that freight train coming down the line.

Lord help me, bring back that baby of mine.

Stephens is one of other contemporary North Carolina bluesmen and women, like Etta Baker, who can fast-pick a boogie/woogie; Algia May Hinton, with her unique style of playing the guitar behind her head as she dances; and James Putmon, who has written tunes to depict the rhythm of working activities such as corn shucking and cotton or peanut picking.

For all these musicians experience is still the quintessence of the blues. Says Richard Trice, a Durham bluesman:

I think there are songs made up now that had no parts of their life or anybody else's in the song. And till a song is actually made up from your life, or some experience in somebody else's, then there's not too much to it.

Guitar Slim agrees. The problem with today's rock and roll is that the singers and instruments aren't saying the same things, he believes.

But rock and roll has been eager to embrace the blues. The Rolling Stones' "Confessing the Blues," the Animals' "Big Boss Man," The Lovin' Spoonful's "Blues in the Bottle," and Bob Dylan's "Fixin' to Die Blues" have all been influenced by blues artists. As Paul Oliver points out in *The Story of the Blues*,

So pervasive has been the influence of the blues on pop music since the early 1960's that it is already difficult to recognize it. Once the twelve-bar, three-line structure was peculiar to the blues; now it is a commonplace. Sliding bottle-necks on guitar strings,

back-beat drumming, cross-ed-harp harmonica—these have become the familiar sounds of the Top Twenties.

Will the blues finally become assimilated totally into modern music? Will its folk character be lost as it becomes an element in a self-conscious art form, no longer living as the spontaneous expression of "a full heart?" One can only hope that a music which springs from the vibrating chords of life's bedrock reality and passion will continue to find an answering note in the responding sympathies of another human heart.

by Denise Cumbee



Taylor Dancy

### Sources

- "Bull City Blues," Glenn Hinson (Office of Folklife Programs)
- Aspects of the Blues Tradition*, Paul Oliver (1968)
- The Story of the Blues*, Paul Oliver (1969).



At 524 Pembroke Avenue in Norfolk, Virginia, among a neighborhood of stately townhouses built on the arching banks of the Hague at the turn of the century, the Natural Bridge of Virginia, the coal mines of West Virginia, the cobblestones of Cromwell's England, and the sea by a Turkish fishing village converge. Every morning, National Book Award-winning writer Mary Lee Settle goes to the third floor to sit at a desk overlooking her new garden and to write of her interior landscapes.

Sitting by a quiet fire with her husband, their two Dalmatians and a Siamese cat, Settle looks around the impressive room. Books and art line the walls nearly fifteen feet up to the ceiling.

"Quite a change from a Turkish fishing village," she says. She pauses, watching the evening news with the

the village has been overwhelmed by luxury hotels, and the life the expatriates sought, they have destroyed.

"The book is a series of misunderstandings," Settle says. "Each viewpoint in the book is followed by another, a contrapuntal series of people."

With so many characters, does Settle ever have problems with one? "Oh certainly. I have problems trying to achieve empathy, I mean empathy and not sympathy. I try to achieve an empathetic closeness to the person. I don't like the word 'character.' That's too literary."

"Lisa in *Blood Tie*, for example. I don't like her. I don't like those young rich bitches who think they can have everything."

She halts once more as the violence in Iran and the face of Ayatollah Khomeini flash on the television screen. "I wish that old goat would die!"

# Filling an Empty Room — The Art of Mary Lee Settle

by G. Dale Neal

latest stalemate in the Iranian crisis.

"I spent three years in Turkey from 1972 to about 1974. 1974 was the year of the Cypriot crisis. I had originally gone to Greece looking for a quiet place to write." She wound up in Kos, a small island off Turkey where a schoolteacher rented her a house.

The result of her stay was the book *Blood Tie* which won her the National Book Award in 1978 and some recognition after nine previous books. The novel is crowded with a cast of Europeans and Americans, expatriates, homosexuals, archeologists, and the jet set pitted against the ancient life and traditions of the Turks. It is a story of power and its obscene abuses, and of irony. The foreigners misinterpret the language and nearly every gesture of the Turks, friendly or hostile. By the end of the novel, a university student has been killed by the police,

Settle from her experiences has her own opinions on the turmoil in the Middle East. She respects men like Sadat, Bani-Sadr, and the former Turkish premier and poet Evci as "intelligent, western educated men."

"But their people are ignorant. They are so emotional, easily swayed one way and then the other. We think of these militant students as similar to our students in the Sixties, but they're not. Most of these people cannot read or write."

Revolution and turmoil were also a part of Settle's inner world during her stay in Turkey as she finished the novel *Prisons* in 1973. The novel is set in seventeenth-century England during the Civil War, and it traces the disillusionment of two young men under Cromwell's Puritan revolution.

"I was tired of hearing students during the Sixties



reading 'revolutionary diaries.' I wanted to write a real revolutionary diary. I also wanted to examine the pattern of revolution you could see happening under Nixon. The right wing uses the left, then does away with them. It was the same pattern in the assumption of power by Napoleon after the French Revolution and in the rise of Stalin after the Russian Revolution. Cromwell was the first modern dictator to use the left wing to establish the political right. You can see it happening in Iran under Khomeini."

*Prisons* surprises the reader used to thinking of Cromwell's rule as a short phase in repressive Puritanism. Carefully researched, the book shows that the ideas of democracy and freedom of thought stirred the times as much as religious differences.

"Most people think that our democratic ideals came over from the French Revolution. Actually the French imported those ideas from the English Civil War."

"Thomas Jefferson used to wear a ring with the word Lilburne on it. Why Lilburne? No Jeffersonian scholar has known who Lilburne was. Freeborn Jack Lilburne and the Levelers."

In *Prisons* Settle writes of this man and his followers:

Their radical policies were beliefs in free speech, religious toleration, liberty of conscience, democracy, and universal manhood suffrage, a political concept so ahead of its time that it took until the mid-nineteenth century in another country, the United States, for it to become a reality.

For its ideas, the novel is also a graphic portrayal of seventeenth century life in England. Settle spent years in research at Oxford and the British Museum. "I found these two, Corporals Church and Perkins in a newspaper account from 1649. Why were these two corporals and an officer executed? I wanted to know the why, so I started digging."

Settle moved into the seventeenth-century idiom slowly, making tape recordings of court documents of the time. "It's like learning a second language. You don't find the common language in Milton's—what is that God awful thing—*Areopagitica*, but in the transactions of the court. But it's very similar to mountaineer speech and to Biblical language."

Settle not only has an ear for the sound of Cromwell's England, but a hard eye for the smoke and blood. Her depictions of battle are terrifying for a woman who has never assaulted anyone with a pole-axe. She laughed: "No, no. Goethe said, 'I myself am capable of every crime.' I think we have a historical memory of those things. And the writer's imagination can run wild."

The hero in *Prisons* dies, but has an illegitimate child, Jonathan Lacy, who goes to Virginia in the prologue as Settle connects the novel with a series of books she began in 1956. In *O Beulah Land!*, the Lacy family is settling the Virginia frontier in the years before the American Revolution. The populace of Lacys, Kreggs and Catletts spill into *Know Nothing*, the second book set in the West Virginia area before the Civil War. In the third novel, *Fight Night on a Sweet Saturday*, a young woman returns from New York to modern day West Virginia to find the





cause of her brother's death. She sorts through the past for the reason.

Settle's new novel *Scapegoat*, due in mid-October, completes the series. Set in 1912, the novel follows more Lacys through the turbulent coal wars with Mother Jones, Joe Hill and the Wobblies, the nation's first union organizers.

"No, no," Settle insists, "I had no conscious plan for a trilogy or a series when I began. I didn't force *Prisons* into the series. It just naturally came out that way.

"I had a working image at first of Johnny McKarkle in that drunk tank in *Fight Night*. Why did that man hit him and kill him? Why him? I had to go back to 1912 and then back to 1861 and 1775, all the way back to 1649 to find out why that man clenched his fist."

In the kitchen, Settle slices potatoes and peppers for supper while her husband, William Tazelwell, sees to the dogs and the drinks. Settle responds sharply to questions of her past.

"Sweetbriar? Ugh!" She cuts another potato in half.

"Now Mary Lee," says Widdy.

"There were several girls there (at Sweetbriar College) who were very artistic, who wanted to write. They drove me nuts. I never trust anyone who says, 'I want to be a writer.' That's literary cocktail party talk which a real writer avoids like the plague.

"I didn't want to write. I wanted to be stupid like every one else. I don't think you decide to be a writer; it decides for you. I don't think anybody can write and be safe—not in the beginning."

Settle goes to the oven where a chicken rests in a baking dish. She sprinkles tarragon, squeezes a lime, and stuffs the lime into the bird. "Come here and I'll show you a secret. Always flambe your meat to seal the skin."

Pouring Christian Brothers brandy in a large spoon, she sets it on the gas fire.



"Use brandy for chicken or duck, rum for pork, whiskey for beef." She bastes the chicken with the blue flame liquor.

Despite her reticence about her Sweetbriar years—she left school without a degree and went to England during the war to serve in the RAF—Settle occasionally teaches courses in writing at the University of Virginia.

---

*"I start with an anonymous room when I start a novel. I change sets. Slowly, this room will fill with things."*

---

"I like teaching when I'm not writing. And I hate it when I am. Teaching takes very much the same energy as writing. But you have to remember that no pronunciation you make in class is going to be remembered. You ought to ask Widdy about teaching."

William Tazelwell, a former newspaperman in Norfolk, currently teaches non-fiction writing in Charlottesville. He laughs, "Handholding 101."

After an hour in the oven, Mary Lee's chicken is ready. They eat around the television, watching a Fred Astaire special. Widdy pats one Dalmatian, Lily, on his lap, while the other, Dan, sleeps curled at his feet. Mary Lee sits by the fire, watching the graceful movements of Astaire in top hat and tails, Rodgers in a swirling dress. Riley the Siamese cuddles under a chair.

"Once the book starts, if you find a place and go there, the book will come find you. And if you're not there when the book comes, what will you do? At least I go up there every morning."

"Up there" is a small room on the third floor overlooking the garden. Settle writes in longhand on large poster-sized sheets of paper. This saves her from constantly flipping through the pages and provides ample space on the back for excerpts.

The early pages of a manuscript are belabored with red ink revisions while in the last pages the writing is tighter and surer. A book goes slow in the beginning, fast in the end. Then the revisions. Her latest novel *Scapegoat* went through five.

The room is sparsely furnished. An old-fashioned white dress with a red nosegay hangs on the wall by a filing cabinet. A beige dress and hat rest on a dressmaker's form.

"I start with an anonymous room when I start a novel. I change sets. Slowly, this room will fill with things." She points to the dresses. "I know that Lily Lacy (in *Scapegoat*) wore that white dress into a coal mine and came out looking like hell. Then she put on that dress and went to New York.

"Look. Do you know who this is?" She points to a closely cropped photograph of a face with a heavy mustache and dark eyes. "This is the man I chose for my grandfather, Conrad."

Under Conrad's watchful eyes in a room of changing atmosphere, Settle lays out her interior landscapes. She resists the banal questions, the reason she writes or when she became a writer, with a simple explanation. "After the war. I was a journalist at the end of the war. I started writing after that."

Pressed for a reason why anyone would write, like Conrad who agonized, who hated to write, Settle says: "Instinct. It's what you do. You don't make an intellectual decision. It makes it for you."

"I think a serious writer has a curious mind. He wants to know the why. He has the same type of mind that tends either to literature or to science. The desire to find out why. Why did Johnny get hit in that drunk tank in *Fight Night*? I had to go back to 1649 to find out why."

"Flannery O'Connor said, 'Explain everything that is explainable, the rest is Magic.'"

For Settle writing is not a conscious undertaking. She admits her work is fragmented. The first lines written in *Blood Tie* are found in the last pages. "The last line of *Scapegoat* was the first line written, but I'm not going to show you that. You'll have to wait until it comes out."

"You start with a working vision you have. When the image starts turning to words, you start writing. Let me repeat. Writing is not an intellectual process. Keats said—well, never mind what Keats or da de da said. We all know the same thing. We may say it in different words, in a hundred different ways, but it is the same classic process."

"I was talking to Reynolds (Price) the other day on the phone. He had just finished a book and he said, 'Mary Lee, why do we do it? Why do we write?'"

"I said, 'Reynolds, we do it for the same reason a male dog lifts its hind leg against a tree. It's the way we're made. It's what we do.'"

"Writing is an energy of instinct. When you have it, you won't be able to resist it. You become a writer when all other doors are closed for you. Resist it at your own peril. Writing is your demon."

Every morning, Mary Lee Settle goes upstairs into her own world, writing to find the why. While other writers have mined one fertile fictional territory, Settle's worlds have been remarkably diverse. "Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha County, Proust's Paris, Hardy's West Country, they wrote of those places because they never really lived anywhere else. My interior landscape covers England, Virginia, West Virginia, and Turkey. I don't think you can have an interior landscape by just visiting a place. You must seem to live there. I mean, the place you live in you take for granted."

Seeming to live in a place while you are writing of a fictional place can be difficult, Settle observed. "I tried writing some of *Blood Tie* in Turkey. I couldn't get away from the book. I'd go out for a walk and the book would be all around me."

"In Oxford when I tried to write *Prisons*, I would go out and know everything that happened on every cobbles-

tone street in the seventeenth century, I could see it so well."

"Writing is a process of memory rather than straight reportage, a distillation into a fictional memory."

For Settle, Norfolk is the best place she has ever lived. The city has all the sophistication of New York without the hype. "A writer must find a balance between being taken for granted as a person and being alone to work. Flaubert said 'Behind every passionate work of art is a bourgeois day—' that's not an exact quote."

"That was Hemingway's problem. He kept going off to exotic places where everyone treated him as a writer. I think Walker Percy has solved this problem by living in a Southern town where he has no kin."

In 1978, *Blood Tie* won the National Book Award in a year that saw the publication of Percy's *Lancelot*, John Cheever's *Falconer*, and Toni Morrison's *Song of Solomon*. "I was totally shocked. I had expected Robert Coover's *The Public Burning* to win. Sure, it changed my life. I get seven times the advance and publicity. Now *O Beulah Land!* and *Know Nothing* are coming out in paperback."

"Did you know that only four women have won in thirty-two NBA's, and three of those four have been Southerners? No, I don't think the judges are to blame. The cultural atmosphere is chauvinistic."

### Excerpt From ACCEPTANCE SPEECH

#### National Book Award/Fiction/1978

If there is an honored region, it is neither north nor south nor city nor country, but the region out of which good writing must come. Conrad called it the lonely region of stress and strife. I call it left field.

If such a region is peopled, it is not by what were once called pale-faces or red skins, but by those whose task it is to break the white silence of the blank page effectively, honorably, honestly and translucently.

And if I must come out of that region representing any sex or color may I do it as Tolstoy represents Natasha or Anna, George Eliot Casaubon, Emily Bronte Heathcliff, or Shakespeare the Moor.

For in that honored region behind the closed door, all defences, all polemics, all manipulations must be left at its borders if we write well, if we are, again in Conrad's words, "to make you see." So I hope a life of us, and the judges who chose us, honor not a person, but a region of the mind, not a single talent, but talent itself.

—Mary Lee Settle



"I know a woman who would never say anything derogatory about Southerners or blacks called me a lady novelist once. That's like saying 'spic.'"

"Women writers have to be very good to be respected. They have a barrier to get over since so many women's romances have been written in the past. The modern equivalent of the women's romance is what I call the vaginal school of writing. How many men you slept with."

"When writers go into the room by themselves, they aren't man or woman or anything. Or they better not be if they're any good."

Settle feels as adamantly about being called a regional writer. "I hate the label 'Southern Writer.' We're just writers who happen to have been born in the South, and who use our background as material."

"The NBA is the cleanest award you can get in America. It is given by your peers, by a jury of good writers. The award buys you time—what every writer understands, not the fame or money that every nonwriter thinks. Buying time. There is nothing a writer needs more."

Every morning, then, at 524 Pembroke, Mary Lee Settle goes upstairs in the townhouse built at the turn of the century to range over a fictional world that stretches from the South to Europe to the Middle East, searching for the whys in the past and present. She writes with an quotation on the wall behind her.

"Work. There is nothing else."

—Einstein

### *Excerpt from* **SCAPEGOAT**

Now it is evening on Lacey Creek. The first stars are out. Down among the tents, the children are chasing lightning bugs. They put them in bottles to make a lantern, and run to find a dark place to test how much they shine. Faint light from the open tent flaps falls on waves of cloth from the acres of clothes lines as the wind catches and tosses them. The canvas tents are faintly shaped by the glow from the kerosene lamps inside them.

The clothes lines bear treasures among the overalls, the shirts, the white aprons and the skirts made from the bolts of embroidered linen sheets from Italy, heavy enough for a lifetime of wear, that have come with the bride chests, lace tablecloths from Ireland like delicate flags to show the gentility of their owners, embroidered waists from Poland, sunflower, sunburst crazy quilts made by the women who have come down from the hill farms, that show a whole history in fragments, hour on winter hour, mile on country mile of care, thread, color that tells who they are, their industry; that they, the women, are used to nice things. The women don't want to leave their washing up to dampen in the night dew. They are afraid the children will stumble on the clothes line poles and they will have it all to do over, but Mother Jones has told them to leave it up, and they do. She says that it hides any meeting in the tents, and the mine guards will be on the lookout. She says to beware of informers and tell terrible stories of Butcher Goujot and the Baldwin Feltz detectives.

So the tablecloths and sheets and skirts sway like warping ghosts in the breeze, and the children hide and seek in and out of the lines, catching lightning bugs. They love the tents. It is like a holiday, like the camping their fathers tell them Mr. Godley took them on when they were boys, miles up Lacey Creek beyond the mines where the creek was clean over the rocks, and there was the same smell of canvas, the same soft tent shadows, green reflections washing across the canvas top, and you could reach out of your cot and touch the grass, the dews and damps from the song they sang, the exposure to the huge outside, and still the protection of grownup voices fading in the night as you went to sleep, and later, part of a dream. They sing the kind of songs they sang with Mr. Godley, songs that float upward and are lost in the night.

In the good old days they told the children, they could hear Mr. Godley slowly blowing taps. Day is done, gone the sun. The face of a boy would appear over the kerosene lamp, and his cupped hand as he blew it out, and the tent was pitch-dark before the pale night came in, and Mr. Godley played the end of taps in the dark. But all that had ended when Imperial came, and nobody knew the owners any more. They were just the company, they didn't have names. They said of Mr. Roundtree that he done the best he could, but he was under orders from the company, too.

Earlier there have been the last sounds of baseball practice, come on, come on, and the hollow crack when



the bat hit right and the calls, here, here, play ball. Mr. Godley had started the baseball team, too, but Imperial gave orders to put more houses up where the diamond was because they needed the space, so Mr. Lacey let them make a diamond out beyond the cemetery. That was the old man, before he died. He even built them a bandstand. They remembered when Beverley was young and they let him play ball with them. They have played later than usual, now that Seven Stars has come out, because they are afraid Mr. Lacey won't let them use the field.

Mr. Lacey has let a lot of Godley people put up tents on his land but all evening the sound of hammers on tent pegs has sounded a broken rhythm and by night Mr. Lacey's land is clear. Where Catlett land stops, the tents stop, too. The older tents have board floors and wooden sides, but the new ones have to be on the bare ground. Some are made from piano boxes, and some from old quilts. But after all it is June and evening, and now that Seven Stars is out, too, there is a sense of celebration. It is, after all, the beginning of summer, and they have planted vegetables on what was Catlett waste-land while Aunt Essie pulled her rocking chair out into the weeds by the clearing and sat and bossed like a section foreman to see they did right.

The Italian women have brought the Paganos down and the men have set up a tent for them. If they have resented them during the month because Francesco has gone on working and Annunciata has let them know that nobody can move them like a sack of potatoes, none of this is mentioned. They treat her gently because she has been fooled, and they respect the humiliation of her finding out. As if she has been stripped of clothes they want to cover her with kindness, lend her things, and touch her hair. The younger Paganos have disappeared among the washing, chasing lightning bugs with the others.

Annunciata, Steve, Eduardo, Maria, and Francesco and their cousin Carlo Michele sit together, part of a circle of the Italian families. The Italian girls look at Carlo Michele sideways and smile. Mother Jones has told them to have a party. They pass fiasci of wine across bodies. Even if it is a false party they are enjoying it after all the trouble. Young Giovanni di Pietro has been chosen to sing. He has the best tenor voice in the camp. The men listen, pleased with the sound. It is too early to meet for a strategy meeting, but there are little knots of men outside the lighted circle, consulting in whispers while Giovanni sings.

Eduardo still has trouble paying attention to the singer. He is watching his mother. She looks happy and bright-eyed with fury which she seems to be enjoying. He wonders how much of the illusions she has lost were a burden to her. She seems years younger. The dignity that kept her so carefully apart from the others has been lost and she even sings, lugubriously, best opera style "Sca-aapa!" and "Addio!" when the singer waves his arm and says "tutti." She sits with her legs easy on the ground like a

Calabrian contadina and not like an Umbrian from a great city. She feels him watching her and smiles. He worries that the wine has made her a little drunk after the shock. She seems to sense this and puts her hand on his leg and whispers in English. "You wait. It's all right," and goes on singing.

Giovanni's voice is so pure that it quiets even the children. It floats upward. It reaches Mr. Roundtree and he stops reading *Daniel Deronda*—he reads ten pages a night—and blows out his lamp to lean out of his living-room window. He has been to Covent Garden and heard Tetrizzini and he misses the opera. He tries to place the aria and decides it is Verdi but can't remember which one. Down below him he sees the Italian transportation men leaning out and listening, too. He can almost feel their homesickness like an ache in his body.

"E uno/sciopro, voi siete crumiri," Giovanni sings, improvising the music, "I guardi sono armati," his voice soars up to the stars and holds on "ah" until no one could hold it longer and the aria subsides into "guardate, attenzione!" and finishes with a lingering "Addio, amici miei."

Mr. Roundtree knows he recognizes that line. He is absolutely sure it is Verdi.

After the pure sound, pure silence in the dark, and he can hear applause and some laughter. He can see the distant steady glow above the trees of the electric lights in the Lacey's house. Nearer, down at the Club House, he sees the Baldwin men through the open window playing cards. He fears the faint cry, "High, low, jick, jack and game."

The lights go out in the rooms of the Italian transportation men. They have been told by the song that the mines are on strike, that they are scabs, and that the guards are armed. Many of them have families in New York waiting to be sent for. They have to decide what to do.

Jake Catlett stands in the shadow of his porch, waiting for the meeting that will happen under cover of a square dance in his barn. He has cut the telephone wires with the wire cutters he borrowed from Beverley. He looks up toward the dark mountain opposite. The moon has not risen, and yet, he sees, he really sees a light moving in front of the mine entry and a woman in white caught in the glow. he knows it is the ghost and he is not surprised, not even scared really. It's a warning. It seems inevitable. He decides not to say a word about it. He doesn't want to listen to the fear of the women and children.

It is Lily holding the lamp of her father's mine hat so she can pick her way down the steep path. She has paused there, caught by the song. Her long hair blows around her. She knows the words. What can happen and the night and what they have done to the Paganos, the mixture of beauty and fear have made her cry so that the warm lights of the tent colony shimmer in the distance. It seems to her to be a thousand miles across the valley but she knows she belongs there with the oppressed of the earth.



Denise Cumbee





# McDibb's

This summer, if you find yourself cruising down I-40 West past Black Mountain, get off the main road and set a course towards Cherry Street, where you'll find McDibb's. McDibb's is the closest thing to a pub that you'll see in the South, and it offers much more than a Budweiser and a wet sleeve.

Serving as a "musicians' workshop," McDibb's features live music from many of the local artists. Even on occasions when non-local acts are playing, there are still opportunities for locals to grab pieces of stage time during set breaks. Puppet shows, one-act plays, poetry readings and story tellings find a place under the McDibb's spotlight.

You'll encounter mountain characters, musicians, artists, and their unrelated consorts. Those four walls also shelter David Peele, who is a bit of an economical philosopher, artist and genius himself.

David, the owner/operator of this establishment, is "not in the business to make people drunk." He sees the bar as a hub where artists may envelop the public into their art, and where the public may go to relax in a socially undemanding atmosphere.

David Peele insists that no coincidences occur at McDibb's. He does not recruit entertainment, but has been without it only once. On that occasion, only one person came in the bar to share a simple evening of "nickel poker" with him.

Peele insists, "If we're out of Moose Head Lager, no one will order a Moose Head."

The "non-coincidences" continued as we, ourselves, discussed the philosophy of Henry George, a 19th century economist, when a stranger off the street walked in for a cup of cider. His name? Henry George!

The location on Cherry Street has been the sight of many bars. "Wonk's," for example, was a local hangout or the riff-raff of Black Mountain. The bar then changed hands and was renamed "The Cherry Street Saloon." This new bar took the Dionysus ideal to an even greater extreme. When Peele bought out the "Cherry

Street Saloon," he arrested this degenerating trend by incorporating his own social insights.

David had to change the clientele, as well as the attitude of the community. He did so by bringing in quality entertainment and phasing out the previous emphasis on alcohol. He began "Monday Night at McDibb's" which became a semi-closed get together with local artists and personal friends. It was a struggle, but slowly he weeded out the undesirables, and McDibb's finally began to acquire a positive image in the community, gaining a reputation for artistic excellence. In turn, this new image encouraged potential poets and actors by providing a channel for their talents and creativity.

Now, families, students from Warren Wilson College, and citizens of Black Mountain, Swannanoa, and Asheville come in to rest on the tree-stump barstools of McDibb's and to share good times over the 61-year-old mahogany counter top. The establishment still has its problems. The powers of an absentee landlord hinder the pub's financial feasibility. There will be complications in keeping McDibb's occupying its sacred spot on Cherry Street.

But as of the summer of 1980, it will still continue to provide a wide variety of acts that include poetry readings, puppet shows, jazz, Irish music, and the bluegrass and country music mothered by the surrounding hills.

If what we have said hasn't sold you on McDibb's and Black Mountain in general, consider the words of a local patron as he was asked casually, "How's everything going around these parts?"... the reply, in a Black Mountain drawl... "a lot bedder than it wuz b'fore!"



This article precedes a more comprehensive look at the Black Mountain school of art appearing in the fall of 1980 issue of *The Student*.

by Kenneth Prichard and Tom Albritton



# A Compendium of Southern Cooking

by Elisabeth Stephens

As participants in such culture-exchange experiments have reported, meaningful dialogue between Northerners and Southerners often tends to falter after running out of curious idioms and unintelligible pronunciations to compare. But not for long, for into such conversational lulls, some irrepressible regionalist eventually introduces the seemingly innocuous query: "Well, have you ever eaten . . . ?" The resulting evangelical fervor with which any Southerner worth his weight in butter beans rises to glorify his favorite food is awesome and moving—it can also be confusing if his audience knows not whereof he speaks. Therefore, in the interest of facilitating communication between North and South, the following brief guide to peculiar(ly) Southern foods has been compiled.

**Georgia ice cream:** [origin uncertain.] Corn is soaked in lye to remove the hulls, ground into coarse meal between heavy mill stones and finally boiled in salted water to produce this popular cereal. The hallmark of Southern cookery, Georgia ice cream may be more widely known by its common appellation, "grits." Yet as persons familiar with current grammatical controversies realize, issues as sticky as cold grits themselves arise from the use of this name; in fact, the question of whether grits *is* or grits *are* generally eaten for breakfast remains a source of interfamilial strife throughout the modern South.

**Gravy, red-eye:** Thin, brown liquid obtained by stirring a little hot water and a little strong coffee into the residue left from frying sliced ham. Properly served, red-eye gravy is poured from the cast-iron skillet into the daintiest gravy bowl in the house, carried to the table and applied liberally to grits and hot biscuits. (Related only cognately to red-eye whiskey.)

**Greens:** The leafy tops of any of a variety of plants (especially mustard and collards, dandelions and turnips), either garden-grown or gathered wild. Greens contain remarkable quantities of vitamins and minerals, but that consideration was of singularly small significance to the old-timey eaters of greens; back when there were no fresh vegetables in winter, the first days of returning spring were occasions of joyous greens-gathering expeditions by

folks simply sick and tired of dried beans and cornbread. (The conventional quantitative measure of greens is, by the way, a "mess.")

**Hawg:** Tragic victim of late fall, community rituals known as "hawg-killin's"; subsequently, an important source of meat in the Southern diet. [See also "pig-pickin'."]

**Hawg-killin':** A distasteful, albeit necessary, step in the provision of food, occurring around Thanksgiving in most places, typically supervised by experienced butchers and characterized by a complete absence of wastefulness. During this day-long operation, virtually every part of the slaughtered pig is allocated for a specific purpose, from his head (soupe meat) to his toes (pickled pigs' feet). Various parts of the hog are salted, ground or smoked to produce salt pork, sausage and bacon. In the preparation of hams, meat cured with salt or brown sugar and sometimes a stay in the smokehouse is left hanging for about a year to season. [For more on ham, see Gravy.] Not an ounce of the hog is wasted, for even the fat is cooked, producing lard, and the cracklings strained out of the lard become an ingredient in cracklin' corn bread.

**Luck, good:** Unbeknownst to many, the elusive favors of fortune are directly dependent upon diet; a New Year's Day dinner of black-eyed peas and hog jowls is a sure-fire guarantee of good luck throughout the coming year.

**Opossum:** See 'possum.

**Pig-pickin':** Though it features the same principal as the hawg-killin', the pig-pickin' is a somewhat less business-like occasion; actually, it serves as a general excuse for the convivial gathering of vast numbers of people from all over the place at the home of a Southerner of unbounded hospitality. This custom, primarily indigenous to the tidewater regions of the South, derives its name from the whole pig cooked over an open pit as food for the entire company. When the officiating pig-pickin' expert pronounces the meat done, guests use their fingers to pick bites of meat right off the pig, which is still suspended over the outdoor roasting pit.



**'Possum:** [technically, "opossum"] Small, nocturnal marsupial with a propensity for feigning death when threatened by predators (hence the expression "to play possum"); also a source of meat in the South, and, most importantly, object of entertaining nighttime 'possum hunts. Equipment for the late October sport of 'possum hunting includes trained dogs, a full moon and a lantern—the dogs trail the 'possum, the moon aids hunters in trailing the dogs, and the lantern augments the illumination provided by the moon. In a successful hunt, the dogs eventually chase the 'possum up a tree, and the hunters shine a light in his face to immobilize him for capture. Sometimes, depending on the excitement of the hunt, the hunters turn the 'possum loose and start in hunting him all over again; but more often they take him home where he spends a few weeks being fattened up in a backyard pen and at last reaches the roasting pan, snuggled in a nest of sweet potatoes.

**Pot likker:** Non-alcoholic, extremely concentrated juice derived from boiled greens and fatback. Pot-likker is commonly spooned over cornbread and is, in the estimation of those who can stand its taste, quite delicious.

**Ramp:** [*Allium tricoccum*, member of the lily family and cousin to wild onions.] Consumption of this late-spring plant, native to the Appalachian regions, is indicative of the heights the folly of men can attain. There is general consensus among those who have eaten (and those who have been around those who have eaten) ramps, that they alone can render the odors of garlic, skunks, and rotten eggs delicate and sweetly fragrant—yet ramp-eating continues: fried ramps, ramps and scrambled eggs, ramps raw-with-a-chunk-of-cornbread. When politics and intestinal indiscretion combine, as at western North Carolina

Ramp Conventions in early May, the result can only be described as human irrationality run rampant.

**Sorghum:** Either a genus of cane, harvested in the fall when full of juice, or the syrup made from sorghum cane. "Sorghum-makin'" refers to the transformational process wherein sorghum cane juice becomes sorghum molasses, a conversion achieved by the agency of a mule (who powers the cane press), a fire (over which cooks the thin, vile-smelling cane juice) and several patient men (who tend the boiling liquid throughout the day until, sometimes deep into the night, it thickens into syrup). Since molasses is no longer the only form of sweetener used in Southern households, however, "sorghum-sopping" is by far the most important related term in use today. The after-supper sopper, disdaining to eat mere blackberry jam on his biscuits, mashes up a chunk of butter with a spoonful of sorghum molasses and dredges a hot biscuit through the resulting mess on his plate. There is no denying that sorghum-sopping is a sticky business, but avid sorghum enthusiasts just lick their fingers and keep right on sopping.

**Stirring:** A critical concept in the making of apple butter, which thick jam of stewed apples and spices is never cooked without constant danger of scorching or sticking to the pot. Like sorghum syrup, apple butter is often prepared in enormous quantities and simmered in a copper kettle over an outdoor fire for as long as eight hours. Because the job of pushing the long-handled stirring stick for such extended periods of time is an exhausting one, apple butter making frequently becomes a community effort, an excuse for neighbor-women to gather and visit with each other while taking turns stirring the bubbling potful of aromatic fruit.

**Supermarket:** That of which there were none during the formative years of Southern cookery. Thus developing without benefit of refrigerated storage rooms and similarly untouched by the vicissitudes of truckers' strikes, Southern eating habits were governed by one principle of harsh reality which still accounts for their distinctive character: if something could not be grown, raised, trapped, treed or gathered fairly close to home, its appearance on the Southern dinner table was, to say the least, unlikely. Conversely, if it was available—somebody was probably eating it.



# The Student

Important Person  
Southland Lane  
Dixie, Ga.

The Student  
7247 Reynolda Station  
Winston-Salem, NC 27109

Dear Important Person:

The Student is a literary magazine dedicated to presenting both imaginative literature by Wake Forest students and articles on contemporary poets, short story writers, and novelists. In the past two years we have published interviews with Mary Hemingway, Reynolds Price, John Ashberry, Derek Mahon, and William Styron. Our accomplishments have been recognized by the Coordinating Council of Literary Magazines, which chose our 1978 magazine second in the nation. For our spring issue, scheduled to come out April 26, we have decided to approach a number of authors and editors with a single question. Because of your contribution to literature, we are most interested in your opinion on the following:

Walker Percy has said, "The day of Southern regional writing is all gone." In view of the rapid assimilation of cultures within America, do you think regional writers still have a unique contribution to make? If so, how can such a contribution be made?

Thank you for your consideration of this question. We are looking forward to your reply.

Sincerely,  
*The Student*



# Is Regional Writing Dead?

## Nine Authors and Editors Reply.

*For our third issue, we sent a number of prominent Southern authors and editors the following question:*

*"Walker Percy has said, 'The day of Southern regional writing is all gone.' In view of the rapid assimilation of cultures within America, do you think regional writers still have a unique contribution to make? How can such a contribution be made?"*

*Most of our respondents emphatically did not believe in the death of Southern regional writing. Some replied in a few sentences; others wrote at length. Their answers are reproduced below.*

what of the "regions" that are created by writers who are writing in opposition to, or if attacked by, their regions?

The day of Southern regional writing is no more gone than it ever was. All one needs is a single inquiring mind that needs once more to discover the terms by which it survives and thrives. We will go on having one now and then as usual as regions blur in and out of definition.

Fred Chappell

A. R. Ammons

The most interesting point to your questions for me is to try to imagine why you are asking them. Are you worried about regional writers, that they may run out of something to write about, lose their region? Or are you worried about the region itself, that it may be rising to dissolution in widespread TV-land? Or don't you suspect that there may be "southern" values that may lose, without imaginative writers, their sharp definition and support?

What is a region? Is it a certain number of States east of the Mississippi or south of the Mason-Dixon line, or is it the world of experience in a man's head, say Faulkner's? And if a region was once in Faulkner's head, isn't it possible that the defining lineaments of another region could be found in another writer's head? And, by the way,

When the stories of Eudora Welty, Tennessee Williams, and William Faulkner are dead, when no one reads Madison Jones, Andrew Lytle, and Reynolds Price, when the words of *The Moviegoer* disappear from the pages of the volumes; then Southern regional writing will be dead.

The new South is not the old South, sure enough, but neither is it the North or the Midwest or California. There is no assimilation of regional culture in America, there is only a thin tissue of connective media-language, continually being transformed by local experience into something richer.

So many things have recently been declared dead—poetry, the novel, film, the Republican Party, God—it is hard to see how regional writing would get left out. Percy couldn't have made the sophomore's mistake of confusing *regional* with *provincial*.

But when a writer makes a remark like this, we've learned to expect that he's engaged on a different kind of project than formerly occupied him. I join with all my writing colleagues in wishing Mr. Percy every success with whatever new endeavor has come to him.



## Marion Montgomery

An adequate response to your question about the state of Southern regional writing would take many pages, but if I may answer briefly: Good fiction or poetry is always "regional" in a sense crucial to its art, whether one look at the tap root and feeders of community as detected in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* or explore the immediacy of Fifth Century Athens to Aeschylus's tragedies. For the viable particular in art must always have regional anchor. Even when the poet himself is restless gnostic, discomforted by his regional anchor and struggling within himself between the pull of his own will to determine reality and his deeper inclination to give consent to a reality independent of his will. I'm thinking here more locally than of Homer or Aeschylus: of Joyce and his quarrel with Dublin, through which quarrel he recognizes affinities to those older poets. Joyce is tempted to a dissociation from "sow Ireland" no less than his Stephen. But Ireland as anchor to the tensional war in Joyce gives a body, a very local presence, to his best work.

To revert to the ancients: Vergil's concern for "the tears of things" in the *Aeneid* gives that work an existential resonance—an anchor in *esse* through the necessarily local *ens*, particularity anchored in the ground of being. Thus Vergil's concern rescues his epic beyond polemic or program. The *Aeneid* is no less "regional" than the *Georgics* when one's sensibilities (themselves necessarily anchored in the local) are ordinarily grounded in one's own and the community's existence within the created world. (The point is worth considering, perhaps, in reflecting on Vergil's popularity in the "old" South.) For though we travel in this world, we travel from local to local, sometimes gaining brief vision of the transcendent and the timeless—through the local.

What a strong sense of the local there is in *The Divine Comedy*, giving that great work its body within which spirit pulses alive. And how immediately at home in place are Plutarch's creatures when given local habitation by Shakespeare, that 16th century London regionalist. E. A. Robinson is right when he has his Ben Jonson remark with a mixture of awe and irritation that Shakespeare, "out of his/Miraculous inviolable increase/Fills Ilion, Rome, or any town you like/Of olden time with timeless Englishmen." The relation of the "timeless," the universal, to the regional is an intimate one, as any artist recognizes in his most lucid reflective moments.

As I suggest above, Joyce's Dublin is not so fanciful but that it echoes the stones and speech of that certain town upon our immediate, most local senses. Indeed, when I reflect on our 2,500 years of great regional art, I must wonder just what is the larger context of Walker Percy's remark that "The day of Southern regional writing is all gone." Even his work, at its best, belies the remark. I recall an old saw of Ezra Pound's, with which I become more

and more comfortable: "Intelligence is international; stupidity is national; art is local." Pound is no "local colorist"—no artist as provincial—though he is always devoted to the "local gods," as he affirms and reaffirms. This is by way of my urging the young writer to be most cautious in digesting such remarks as the one isolated from Walker Percy. He might with greater profit reflect on the difference Allen Tate makes between the regional and the provincial in "The New Provincialism." Tate's is a distinction pursued at length and depth by a various mind—poet, critic, philosopher. And increasingly so of late as we more and more sense that we have come to crisis through a rampant provincialism that parades as enlightenment. I have in mind such prophets as Richard Weaver, Eric Voegelin, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, though the list might be extended considerably.

---

*"The viable particular in art must  
always have regional anchor."*

---

Tate remarks a profound difference between the terms, worth my quoting:

Regionalism is limited in space but not in time. The provincial attitude is limited in time but not in space; provincialism is that state of mind in which regional men lose their origin in the past and its continuity into the present, and begin every day as if there had been no yesterday. . . . it is a difference between two worlds: the provincial world of the present, which sees in material welfare and legal justice the whole solution to the human problem; and the classical-Christian world, based upon regional consciousness, which held that honor, truth, imagination, human dignity, and limited acquisitiveness, could alone justify a social order however rich and efficient it may be.

Tate speaks here of that regional consciousness as if it were more nearly doomed than besieged. He is writing at the end of World War II, at a point where Faulkner is known only sparsely in our nation, though known well on the continent. At a point before Flannery O'Connor has begun to write. "From now on," Tate adds, "we are committed to seeing *with*, not *through* the eye: we, as provincials who do not live anywhere." His remark seems reflected by the Percy quote above; but then, Percy had not himself begun to write at that time. Solzhenitsyn's arresting Harvard commencement speech very much echoes Tate's distinction, though grown out of a quite different regional soil. It is in a spirit more spectacularly buffeted, more so than the regional consciousness so often re-



marked in Southern writing. But it does not echo despondency. Solzhenitsyn's address is to your questions, with an affirmation of the distinction between the regional and provincial consciousness. He is concerned that the regional consciousness be rescued because it is necessary to the health of both community and art. But his cry of concern affirms the abiding, which will be maintained by some saving remnant, whatever region of creation bounds that remnant's habitation.

To return to your question, then: the day of *regional* writing is never over, whether the term be limited from time to time by calling it "Southern" or "Irish" or "Russian." But when the particular writer succumbs to the provincialism which is everywhere rampant in our "national spirit," he will cease to be regionalist and increasingly become a provincial writer, with all the weaknesses that provincialism intrudes upon art. His state of mind will be reflected in his art, and his art in turn will become increasingly the historian's province of interest rather

than the aesthetician's. The writer himself will probably be revealed by the historian as secular gnostic (in Eric Voegelin's sense) or as secular Manichaean (in Flannery O'Connor's). For his provincial consciousness will have superimposed distortions upon the reality of being that is the prime source of art's life. Whatever the limits of the vision that is his gift, it too will suffer the inevitable glaucoma of gnosticism. While the tensions between what he sees and what he would see are growing, he may write the sort of arresting fiction that Joyce does in *Dubliners*, *Portrait*, *Ulysses*. Incidentally, this tensional Joycean struggle I find in Walker Percy's own novels. I seem to sense a struggle in Percy himself lest vision be distorted by will, so that I view his remark on Southern regional writing with some alarm for what it may portend to his art out of that struggle. For if the gnostic vision triumphs, one may create only such a display of the regional paralyzed as *Finnegans Wake*, which speaks life increasingly disjointed from art.



Lisa Smith



## James Dickey

Thank you for your letter. In answer to Mr. Percy's observation, I would say that I don't believe doctrinaire or chauvinistic regional writing is or has ever been the answer to anything. Nevertheless, no universal truth ever came out of a void. Local circumstances, one way or the other, must give rise to the general formulation. Walker Percy himself is as "regional" as anyone might wish. He is good, not in spite of New Orleans, but because of it.

## Staige D. Blackford

You have posed a tough question, but, yes, I do think regional writers still have a contribution to make, if for no other reason than that the lands from which they write are so different—say, the difference between the Mississippi Delta and up in Michigan, or the difference between Manhattan Island, the Great Plains, and the Rockies. And for a notable example of how such a contribution can be made, I refer you to the lead review in yesterday's *New York Times Book Review*.

## Andrew Lytle

No writing is done in a vacuum. It is all regional in the sense that the artist has been moulded by a given culture. Any artifact, that is made by craft with the power of an art, must have a universal subject. But it can only be wrought by a craft which uses the regional manners and mores, not those of another region. To display through an action a region as a region is not artful; it is local color, and local color treats of the accidents, not the essence, of a subject.

## Anne Tyler

Since this whole country strikes me still as nothing *but* regions—each city, even, composed of a dozen or more distinct compartments—I can't imagine why regional writers should not continue to make a contribution. All that's necessary is that the writers preserve a clear sense of their own boundaries by fixing themselves stubbornly in one geographical spot (mentally if not physically), and that seems to be a tendency of most writers anyhow.



## George Garrett

Mr. Percy is, in my opinion, a good man and a very intelligent and thoughtful man and a fine Southern writer. I read everything he writes. I admire him and his works. I wish him well in everything.

But I think he is . . . well, uh, WRONG.

In one way, I *know* he's wrong. In the same way that another fine Southern gentleman and writer, Robert Penn Warren, is wrong also. When (in "Under The Spell of Eudora Welty," *The New York Times Book Review*, March 2, 1980, pp. 1, 26-27) he praises the "special kind of conversational flow among Southern women," which, as he describes it is narrative, anecdotal, etc.—"all the things that characterize 'a woman's talk' . . ." He then goes on to say something, in this particular context, close to what Mr. Percy is saying: "Alas, the temper of our time has almost abolished that gift from the Southern female tongue. I now hear it in no one younger than fifty—and rarely that young—nor the imagination, sensibility, wit, humor, mimicry and pity that usually go with it." My answer to this is that *of course* there will never be another writer like Miss Welty. Every good and worthy writer—and we have had many good and worthy writers, men and women, in the South—is unique. Irreplaceable. But . . . every good and worthy writer lives on in the words, itself, simultaneously and for as long as we have a language and a literature. Furthermore, every good and worthy writer has a direct and beneficial influence upon the good and worthy writers of the next generation.

There are many, not a few, young women in the South today who are writing in the grand tradition that Warren celebrates yet also in their own voices.

Just so, judging only by the anthologies coming along and by the magazines and the news from the many and growing writing programs all through the South, there are many, not a few, very gifted young Southern writers who have not heard—and probably wouldn't believe it if they heard it, even from Mr. Percy in person—that "the day of Southern regional writing is all gone." These young writers are already making their marks and will continue to do so. Their nostalgia may be every bit as real as that of their elders, but it is and will be different.

It is no wonder, and not finally important, that writers as distinguished and busy as, say, Mr. Percy or Mr. Warren, don't know who these people are or what they may be up to. What is much more important, undeniably important, is that the young writers know very well who Mr. Percy and Mr. Warren are and what *they* are doing. And both these writers are a real, possibly profound, influence on the young; though the young are not apt to settle for simply *imitating* them (or anybody else).

So my first reply to Mr. Percy's statement, allowing for the fact that what he means by "regional writing" may be

either a very strict and specific definition or a very personal one, is that the present literary situation in the South (and elsewhere; for Southerners are as mobile as everyone else) proves him wrong.

But I would disagree with him even if there were not impressive numbers of young, clearly and unequivocally Southern writers writing today. I would say that, in any case, there will be a distinctly Southern literature to express and reflect the facts of a distinctly, and probably increasingly different Southern way of life.

A considerable, and very impressive, body of important thinkers believes and argues that throughout the entire world the more powerful force at work is the breakdown of large political and social units into small ones. The great nation states, even Russia and the U. S., are threatened with radical internal change, both political and social, indeed even geographical. Danger, from each other, is holding the two big Superpowers together. More or less. Meantime there isn't a country or nation state in the world that is not dividing into separate and distinct parts of itself. In many cases this division is accompanied

---

*"The only imaginable place where regionalism is gone for good is . . . Heaven. There are no Regions in Heaven."*

---

by turbulence and bloodshed. Within the U. S., thanks to freedom and mobility, commendable changes are taking place swiftly and fairly quietly.

Large population movements. People are staying in the South, when able to. Many others are moving there. And not just for the climate and the weather. It is the life and the lifestyle that appeal to them. Just so, many people are cheerfully moving up here, in Upper New England, where I am now living. The weather is savage. The life is quite wonderful. And not widely or deeply different from the South—because the same people, kinfolks and cousins, really, settled here. Especially in Maine.

I am here because my wife's grandmother, who lived here until she was ninety-eight, died and we inherited this beautiful little house in the coast by a river. This area was always popular with Southerners. Sidney Lanier used to vacation here. Direct descendants of Lanier live down the road. Mark Twain built and spent summers in a beautiful house on a bluff or cliff above the river about a half mile upriver from my house. Also, Calder Willingham, a wonderful Southern writer, lives over in New Hampshire, as does John Yount.

My children are Southern by upbringing. Have lived all over the South. Have a rich and intricate network of kinfolk there. Yet, on their mother's side, they become the fifth generation of that family to live in this town, in this house.



Enough about me.

It's just that my situation is not . . . untypical.

People move and live, in contemporary America, for many reasons. But there is a large element of *choice*. They choose to join a way of life. Like converts, then, they are apt to be more conservative and defensive of their acquired way and habits of life than the native born.

Today the South is, finally, growing in population and in prosperity, while the great cities of the East rapidly decline in population and hover on the edges of bankruptcy. Indeed, without rich infusions of tax dollars from the South, the "Sunbelt," many of these cities would quickly go under.

New York is on its last legs. Even as a so-called Cultural Center. Which has become its last leg.

At the moment they are fighting a ruthless and savage rearguard action. Scorched earth is their policy. In literature they deliberately and carefully ignore all but a few, pet Southern writers. They are pretending that young Southern poets, novelists, story writers, etc. do not exist. They are wrong. And they know it.

In a fairly short time, it seems likely that different parts and cities in the South will (again) be publishing and cultural centers, able to sustain and support a creative culture.

What I am saying is that "the rapid assimilation of cultures in America" is more apparent than real. That, in fact, regions are becoming more distinct and, in many ways, more separate.

Given a period of peace and plenty, the U. S. would very soon resemble a modern version of the Confederate States of America.

Let me add something.

Precisely because I *am* a Southerner, I believe that places are enchanted. Rich with spirits. All houses, sooner or later, are haunted.

So, if it's any consolation—and it *ought to be*, you know, no matter what happened—war, plague, flood or fire, if we are all gone and you and I and Miss Welty and Mr. Warren and Mr. Walker Percy all vanish (equally) leaving no jot or tittle, no trace behind to prove we were ever here, and if we are replaced by survivors, strangers (most





## Robert Morgan

likely Chinese, if you trust statistics, but maybe distant and humble peoples like, for instance, pygmies, or Eskimos, or Bushmen, or even Abominable Snowmen) these people will feel the enchantment and the haunting much as we do and they will reflect and express this in a literature. For since they have language, they have and will have literature—oral or written or both, no matter. This literature will, inevitably and invariably, be . . . Southern. I have to believe that because I am a Southerner.

I believe it would be the case even if everybody on earth were wasted and blown away. Martians (or Somebody) would eventually land and live here and become Southerners. Different, but . . . the same, too.

I think—and offer this thought for Mr. Percy—that the only imaginable place where regionalism is gone for good is . . . Heaven. There are no Regions in Heaven.

Otherwise we, and all who come after, are stuck with them.

So the contribution will be much the same, however different in terms or degrees, as it has always been. For instance, a love of language (from high rhetoric to lingo) for its own sake; a love of story telling; a strong sense of blood kinship and family and, thus, of heritage, of history; a love of the land, of nature, then.

Now, we may change the forms, the ways and means, in the future. Who knows what form the story-telling of the future will take?

I don't know *how* the contribution can be made. Just that it *will be made*.

I am convinced that the South has contributions to make not just to the nation, but to the world. One of these contributions is Cultural. One of these Cultural contributions is . . . literature.

Any suggestions? Well, I wish more Southern readers . . . I wish there *were* more Southern readers . . . would make an effort to know and to read and to support some of their own writers, the Unknown as well as the Known.

At the moment the business of being "Known" is conferred from elsewhere, from the dying cultural center in New York and not from our own region and people. Because we are polite we follow the advice (might as well call it the Commandments) of others.

We are probably at the end of many superficial aspects of our Southern way of life (and art). The essential things, the enchanted and haunting aspects, will not change.

I am bold enough to think that *that*, in itself, is a Southern message. Very regional.

Of course, I'd be lying if I didn't admit that I think Mr. Percy was probably kidding around, in very Southern fashion, very traditionally, trying to stir things up a little.

I guess he did.

First let me say that Walker Percy is right of course: "regional writing" in the sense he means is long gone. The freshness and novelty of the discovery of the South and Southern vernacular by Faulkner, Wolfe, Caldwell and others about fifty years ago, and brought to such a pitch of the grotesque and funny and tragic by them and others, is no longer ours for doing. Back then it was new and it even sold. But that day is gone. "Southern writing" has already been done and in some cases done superbly. But the fashions now seem to follow ethnic, religious and racial lines, not regional.

The term "regional" itself is slippery. In a way, most writing is regional, from Homer to Joyce. Would we belittle *Ulysses* because it is set in one place? Or is Yeats to be written off as a "regionalist" because he is so concerned with backward Ireland? Is Thoreau merely a regional writer because everything he wrote, almost, was for and about Concord? We write about what we know and what we are given.

It seems there has been a tendency to see writing set in the South as "regional" but writing set in New England, instance, as art in its own right. Clearly the label is intended to be pejorative, implying of interest more for its location than for its art. Sometimes this reflects the attitude toward the South as much as the quality of writing done below the Mason-Dixon line.

New England's great advantage was always the authority of its intellectual and theological tradition, and the accomplishment of its craftsmen. The South, with its emphasis on land and social position and manners, had nothing comparable to grow on. The other thing the South had, the frontier humor of the poor white, black and red, the tall-tale, the yarn and practical joke, later boosted the development of its fiction, leaving little for poets. The only exception is Poe. But out of the failure of the Old South, and the suffering of Reconstruction and eighty years of poverty, something matured enough to be interesting. Even a kind of spirituality was won. The last great minority to have its say in this country may be the poor whites of the South coming into their own among the freeways and new universities built on washed-out cornfields. I wouldn't be surprised. At least there will be no taint of the old genteel bias.

The only true answer to the charge of "regional" is in the merit of the work itself. If the strength of a poem or story is the location of its action, then it deserves the belittling the term implies. Certainly the craft of poetry will be sunk by its own anchor, if it is only defined by its anchor of "place." The worst fallacy of self-conscious "regionalism" has always been its apparent faith that wornout ideas and expressions in a local setting are no longer wornout. Anyone who settles for the sentimental or merely quaint is far from poetry already.



It would seem that the modern fashions of avant-gardism and experimentation for its own sake are played out. And the result has not been as great as many scholars assume. American poetry in the first half of this century achieved only one great poet through its obsession with modernism, Wallace Stevens, and now his influence has become so dominating as to be downright stifling. Almost none of the voices in fashion escape his echo, most miming the tics and figures of his genius without even knowing it. It is time for us to think of some new things, and some old things. Perhaps we of the South have something to offer if we can have our say (and we can) and realize something meaningful to us and anyone else who cares for such things.

I feel at once a solitary individual, a citizen of the planet, American, a Southern mountaineer, in about that order. But I am what I am, and will let others worry about the labels.

*A. R. Ammons graduated from Wake Forest University. He won the National Book Award for his **Collected Poems** (1973) and the Bollingen Prize for Poetry for **Sphere: The Form of a Motion**. His book **Selected Longer Poems** has just been published by W. W. Norton.*

*Fred Chappell is the author of a number of books of verse, including the tetralogy **Midquest**, as well as several novels. He is now in the Department of English at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.*

*Marion Montgomery is currently at the University of Georgia in Athens. His three-volume work—I. **Why Flannery O'Connor Stayed Home**; II. **Why Poe Drank Liquor**; III. **Why Hawthorne Was Melancholy**—is now in press.*

*James Dickey, author of the novel **Deliverance** and numerous books of poetry, including **Buckdancer's Choice**, the winner of the 1968 National Book Award, now teaches at the University of South Carolina.*

*Staige D. Blackford is the editor of the **The Virginia Quarterly Review**.*

*Andrew Lytle has edited the **Sewanee Review** and is the author of several books, including a family chronicle, **A Wake for the Living**.*

*Anne Tyler lives in Maryland. She has written several novels, the most recent of which is **Earthly Possessions**.*

*George Garrett currently resides in York Harbour, Maine. He has published numerous novels and short stories, as well as four books of poetry.*

*Robert Morgan is currently in the Department of English at Cornell University. He published **Red Owl**, a book of poems, in 1975.*



Lisa Smith

## Figure Study

I have drawn her,  
And from her,  
And to her,  
With her  
I have drawn away  
My existence  
Is she  
As she moves in grace  
Flowing languid,  
With eyes turned downward,  
Now glimmer up  
Sun and quick  
Eclipse,

Her form hardens in mid-motion,  
Lines and surface solidify,  
Her core is hollow,  
Solidity melts pure  
Into pools reflecting gaping space above,  
Round sound echoes and deep  
Fathomless reflection  
Sinks in stagnant waters which have no depth,  
Resurface  
With tentative abandon  
To be sucked immediately down and across  
And down,

I have drawn her  
And let her live,  
Though I could not stop  
Her melting  
Revelation of empty  
Ugly nothing,

At once nothing and alien,  
Everything and kindred,  
I am drawn of her,  
As brilliant lamplight pours  
Frothy across poignant innocence  
Of naughty face,  
Imitating the sun,  
As unuttered tears  
Well deep,  
Filling, filling,  
And releases in perfect unadorned emotion,  
Between shadow modulation and  
Smooth bright alabaster  
Of small piqued face,  
I have drawn her.

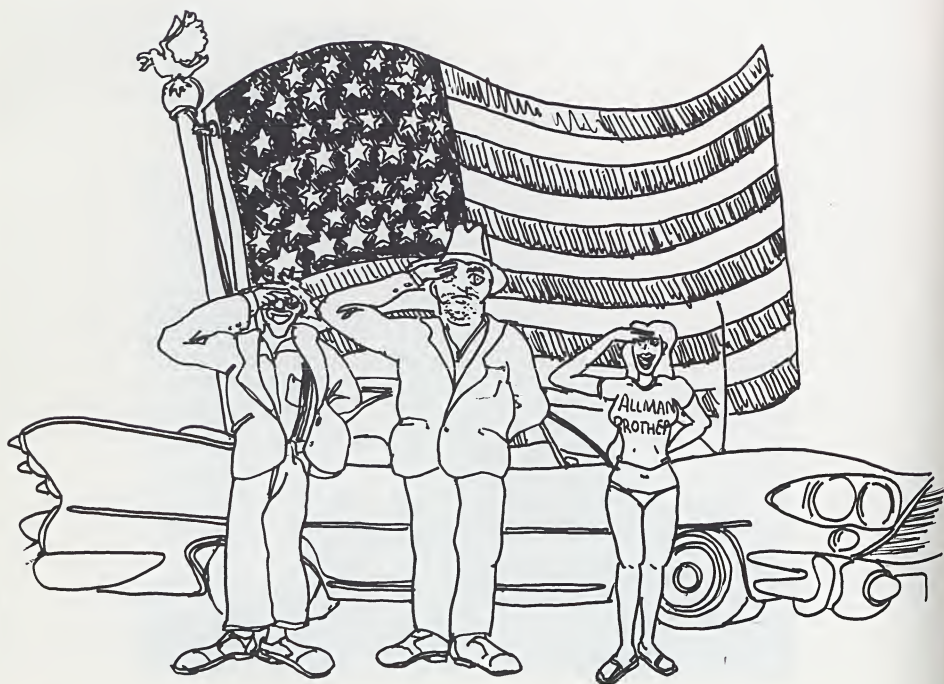
*by Beth Boone*



# AMERICAN MELODRAMA

by  
G. Dale Neal

*Well I ain't good looking, baby  
But I'm somewhat sweet and kind.  
Going to the country.  
Baby, do you wanna go?  
I know if you can't make it,  
Your sister Lucille say she wanna go.*  
"Statesboro Blues"  
Blind Willie McTell



Taylor Dancy

The way it seemed would tremble the hand, palpitate the heart of any sheriff's deputy who spent the desert nights guarding an empty jail with the most recent issue of *The National Enquirer*. He would wipe the sweat from his thin mustache and make another go at setting down in police jargon for his superior the most sordid thing that had ever happened in this part of New Mexico.

*Deputies Jones and Wesson answer call at the Sidewinder Inn shortly after midnight. Suspect, Caucasian, female, around 16, found sitting crosslegged and very much naked in front of motel room no. 10. Body, Caucasian, male, around 50, fully clothed, found in bathtub. One television set, cheap, black and white, Magnavox, discovered on top of body, still plugged into the light over mirror. Second suspect, Caucasian, male, age unknown, found under bed. Officers discover him by the quivering of bed-springs. Suspect coaxed out from under bed by the naked girl's offer of chewing gum.*

The deputy trembled. There was sweat on the palms of his pudgy hands. He flipped a page of the *True Detective* magazine lying to the side and found the photo of the buxom blonde, her mouth agape in a posed scream as her attacker waved the long knife under her 40-D cup bra.

The way it seemed to a sweaty fat deputy easily aroused by confessional accounts of strange sex, unspeakable rapes and mutilations, horrible bedroom deeds, was not the way it was. The skeletal outline of the police report he would have filed by the next morning robs the most sordid thing that ever happened in this part of New Mexico of the bruised flesh and hot blood.

The way it seemed and the way it really went. Like reading the short

clippings buried among the obituaries of the newspaper, the last page of a paperback novel sold beside a grocery store check-out, a short sordid headliner in a tabloid with a cover of Jackie O, you never read the unwritten. Standing at the end of the road, you forget to look back at the miles of asphalt.

August 5. It was a dog of a day in Statesboro, Ga. The temperature crawled sluggishly into the upper 80's before sixteen-year-old Lucy Wysocow got out of bed that morning.

No need to kick off any covers, just roll out of bed. Flip through the pages of the *Cosmopolitan* on the floor. Dream in the morning of a world outside of Statesboro where other sixteen-year-old girls wore nice coats and long boots and wore lip gloss and got invited out by nice boys to candlelight dinners.

Lucy went to the window and looked at the Exxon station next door. The regulars had begun to show. They would sit in the shade on motor oil crates and spit and talk and drink sodas all day until it was time to go home. If these old grizzled men were lucky, they would catch a fluttering peek at the Wysocow broads next door, the mother who looked her former beauty only in the dim light of the bars she frequented, or the toothsome daughter who ran around the house in a string bikini or less.

None commented on Mr. Wysocow or the idea of a Polish family in the heart of Georgia. No one knew him or where he had gone. No one much cared. Betty Wysocow was known across town with a nod and a wink, and her daughter was enough to heat the true red blood of any American male even if she was a Polack.

At sixteen, Lucy was not naive. She read *Cosmopolitan*, sneaking it in the house past her mama. Easy enough since her mama was hardly at home.

Her mama had warned early on that she would get pregnant if she kissed a boy with their tongues touching. Lucy realized there was more to it than that the morning in the eighth grade when a seventh grader

had tackled her in the bushes on the way to school.

Lucy looked out the window a long time. She thought it was about time for her show. Standing in the bathtub, she shaved her long legs with not a nick or a cut to mar the white skin. She slipped on the red bikini, her favorite since her mama hated it. She worked her mouth into a pout for the lipstick, drooped eyelid after eyelid for the mascara and fixed her face into a questionable light somewhere between moonlight and neon, depending on how bloodshot the eyes of the beholders would be.

Lucy's mama had threatened her with a drunken violence if her big Pontiac was not washed this afternoon, but Lucy's mama probably didn't want her daughter a spectacle beside the Exxon station. Several of the old geezers nearly died of cardiac arrest when Lucy doubled daintily over the bucket of suds and leaned far, far over the hood, scrubbing away. One old man would not stop his grey-stubbled, toothless jaw trembling all afternoon after Lucy did what she did with the garden hose.

Lucy usually got bored after an hour or so of washing her mama's car. A young girl of sixteen can derive only a certain amount of coquettish satisfaction from teasing a handful of old men at a service station. But today was different. Lucy hadn't noticed when the long black Cadillac covered with the dust of long miles had pulled in by the Regular pumps, but she soon knew out of the corners of her blue eyes she had a new audience.

A man in black with stately grey sideburns creeping down from his black, broad brimmed hat stood by the cola machine, quiet-like, swilling a 7-Up. Like a cat, he sauntered back to his car and slid his lean figure behind the big wheel. Lucy thought he looked like the bad guy in an old TV Western—she couldn't remember which one—the cool gambler playing for the high stakes, come to town to face down Matt Dillon, Ben Cartwright and the rest.

The man in black rode away down the street out of Statesboro, but not out of Lucy's daydreams. Sitting on



her mama's front porch, leafing through the August *Cosmopolitan*, she wasn't surprised when she saw a long black Cadillac creeping slowly around the block an hour later.

The big car stopped at the broken curb and the window came rolling down.

"Hey there, sweet thing," a voice as soft and clear as the tinkle of ice in a glass of lemonade to Lucy's ears.

"Hey," she called back from the porch.

The car purring by the curb, the shadow of the man in black waiting, the pages of the *Cosmopolitan* rustling in the noon breeze, Lucy wasn't sure, couldn't be certain what it was that caused her to step off her mama's porch, swing her hips across the rough yard and lean way into the window of a stranger's car.

"Hey there," Lucy grinned, smacking wide her gum-chewing smile. "You sure got a mean looking car, now don't you?"

The man flashed his golden smile, all 14 carats of it in his front teeth. "At least, I put my money where my mouth is, har har har," he would joke with Lucy later. Others who knew him would have said those two gold teeth were the only pure things in this man's head.

"You better believe it, girl. Say, what's your name?"

"Lucy Wysocow."

"Little Lucy, Lucy Wysocow," the man said, stroking his chin.

"What's your name? I told you mine. You tell me yours."

"Oh, Cal. Just Cal."

Lucy pushed a wisp of her long blonde hair behind one ear, smacking wide the gum-chewing smile. "Cal. I like that name."

And Cal tilted back his black broad-brimmed hat and looked her in the eyes. Lucy never could say what color his eyes were. Not blue or brown or grey or green like they described eyes in the *Cosmopolitan* love stories. Cal's eyes, well, they just looked drained, colorless and she never caught Cal blinking. Ever.

"Say, little Lucy, where's your mama?" The golden smile, the colorless eyes not blinking like a snake, yes

that's what Cal's eyes were like.

The wisp of blonde hair had fallen again across her face. "I don't know. I can't say. I better..."

"Say now, little Lucy. You want to go for a ride?" And Cal tilted the black broad-brimmed hat down low over his face.

Lucy stood up and pushed that stupid hair back against her head. "I don't know where my mama is. I..." The black Cadillac accelerated with a low throaty noise. "No... You... I... Cal, you just wait here."

Lucy ran back across the yard, up the porch and inside. She grabbed an Allman Brothers T-shirt and slipped it on over her bikini. As a last thought, she grabbed the magazine off the front porch.

Sliding on the seat over to Cal's thigh, Lucy said, "Let's do it."

She had never heard a squall like that black Cadillac made, tearing off the curb. Around the corner, the machine squealed along with Lucy. Roaring down the road, the car, Cal and Lucy with the hot wind roaring in her ears. Cal gritted his golden smile and gunned it. Lucy laughed and waved at the old men at the Exxon, at the old black women standing at the corners, waiting for the bus. Nobody waved back and Lucy laughed and laughed.

They heard the sound of tires and engine inside the Catfish Tap and Grill where Betty Wysocow sat, swaying slightly, on the bar stool. "I'm dead drunk on my ass but I'm telling you the truth. I can tell you what's what and who's who. What time is it now? Could I have another beer, sweetie? What more can I say? Damn right it's a bad situation, but I don't give a shit what other people do. I'm an in-de-pend-ent person. They don't boggle me, no siree. What?" said Betty Wysocow as her daughter rode out of Statesboro with a man in black, laughing and shaking the highway wind through her blonde running hair.

They rode through the barren stretches of Georgia, long rows of scrub pine giving way to flat expanses of stagnant marsh. Cal kept the Cadillac at 70, catching furtive glances at

the white thigh stretching away from under Lucy's Allman Brothers t-shirt.

Lucy was aware of her sweaty skin sticking to the vinyl upholstery. She lay back her head on the seat next to the shoulder of the man in black carrying her into the West. Just like an old movie she had seen while waiting for her mama to come home late one night.

Lucy laid back her head and through her blonde lashes watched the blue sky going by, washing over the windshield, over the black roof. The hum of the black road going underneath sang to her ears. Black and blue, black and blue, the sky and the road and the black roof, black and blue, a bruise she remembered now. When she was little she had fallen off the monkey bars on the playground. Black and blue, her eye had turned and she had cried and cried. Even weeks later, after the bruise and the hurt had long disappeared, she lay her head on her pillow at night and cried and cried. The crying had felt so good.

When she awoke, it was night. She gave a little yawn.

"Hello there, little Lucy. You tired now?"

Through her sleepy eyes, Lucy could still see the flash of Cal's golden smile in the dark. She buried her nose against Cal's shoulder, the black cloth smelled of a man's astringent musk. It made her nose itch.

"Little Lucy, come on now. You get in the back seat and get you a little snoozin' now, honey."

Cal left the window open as he drove towards the Alabama state line. Lucy was cold. She drew her bare legs up in a crouch. She didn't mind that Cal hadn't offered her his musky black jacket to lay over her. Lucy just slept, her lipstick mouth ajar slightly.

Lucy did not hear the Cadillac pulling off the side of the road. She did not hear the back door open. The tickle of grey sideburns against her sleep-swollen face woke her up. She could not see. All was black in the inside of the car and Cal never once opened his golden mouth. Lucy did not protest or whimper or moan or anything. She

felt Cal on top of her, but looked straight up past his head into the black. Far away and down there, she could feel him moving, hard until it almost hurt. She looked into the black and wondered is this the way it is. Is this the way it feels in *Cosmopolitan* for the nice girls in coats and boots, who wear lip gloss, under the candlelight dinners?

No black and blue now. No real hurting inside or the good feel of the tears rolling down her face. Nothing but the black over her, the car, the night, even Cal. Nothing like an emptiness.

August 6. She raised her head over the front seat and saw her sleepy face and tousled hair in the rear view mirror. She saw the parking lot at dawn and Cal inside the 7-11 store. He seemed to be arguing with the cashier, his gaunt shoulders twitched and his mouth opened and closed wide in a dumb show behind the glass front of the store.

Lucy ducked down when Cal came running out. She heard the door slam and the Cadillac pulling out on to the highway. Cal was wheezing in the front seat. Lucy suddenly realized how old Cal really was.

She sat up. Cal looked at her in the mirror with those colorless eyes. Lucy couldn't see the golden smile.

"Well now. Morning, little Lucy."

"Morning, Cal," Lucy said politely.

"Boy, wasn't that something last night. Whooooee girl! You stick with Cal and I'll take good care of you. See this?"

Cal held up a fistful of dollars.

"You and me are going to have a fine time, little Lucy."

Breakfast was a couple of Honey Buns and Nehi grape sodas garnered from a vending machine at a service station somewhere in Alabama. Cal had gotten only \$14.83 for his troubles at the store. They couldn't stop at a regular restaurant for a while, he said. A middle aged man and a girl in a bikini and Allman Brothers T-shirt would be too obvious. For the time being, Lucy had to go behind the service station to relieve herself. All the

restrooms were still locked.

Coming back around the building, careful for the broken glass on her bare feet, Lucy saw Cal put his hand to his mouth and then gulp some soda. While Cal busied himself trying to kick the change out of the drink machine, Lucy looked at the bottle of pills he had placed in the glove compartment. They were white. Funny, a colorless, drained white that matched Cal's eyes.

On the road, they talked little. He would hum something that blended with the hum of the wheels underneath.

"Ain't that right, little Lucy," he would say.

"That's right, Cal," she would answer softly, not knowing what the hell that was, just affirming his private thoughts.

She fiddled with the radio and got a farm report, the local obituaries, a gospel preacher ranting about fornication. He drove at 70 and 80, his eyes fixed on the road, his fists clenched white on the wheel to keep from shaking. She sat with her face pressed against the cold window, watching the red dirt run monotonously by the broken edge of the road. He drove, watched the white lines come shooting down the asphalt like torpedoes, and thought, "Hoo boy, Hoo boy" of little Lucy and her white legs beside him. She sat and he drove.

Miles later, Cal happened to look up in the rear view mirror. Lucy noticed that he was staring. She was about to say that a good driver ought to be looking at the road and not at himself.

His mouth dropped open, making a round black hole. The string of spitte between his golden teeth and his lip snapped in a scream. "Git down! Git down!"

Lucy turned her head, but Cal pushed her down and held her face to the seat with one hand. "Little girl, I said git down. You want to go to prison? That's a policeman back there on our ass. And it'll be your ass and mine if that sonovabitch figures out who we are!"

"But Cal, we ain't done nothing wrong," Lucy said through Cal's fingers on her face.

"Wrong? Wrong? You don't think they just gave me that money back at that store? And the Mann Act, oh shit, the Mann Act! Why did I pick you up, you teasing Jezebel?"

"The Mann Act?"

"The Mann Act," he cruelly mimicked her girlish ignorance. "That's a law, a law little Lucy, against knocking up little girls like you across the state line. Holy shit, he's got us. He's talking to the radio. Oh shit shit shit..." Cal didn't stop spitting obscenities at the windshield until he saw the state trooper turn off at a Stuckey's.

He felt the sweat prickle at the small of his back and the catch his heart made in his shallow wheezing. He felt his hand trembling on Lucy's face and he began to slowly stroke her blonde hair. "Oh shit oh shit oh shit I'm sorry I'm sorry oh shit," he spoke a soft lullaby.

Lucy, not knowing what to do, licked the palm of Cal's hand.

August 7. The trail of \$14.83 across the barrenness of Alabama and into Mississippi, dropped coin by coin, bill by bill at soft drink machines and roadside cafes for coffee and toast, at a five and ten where there was nothing to be had for under a dollar so Cal had to carry out the pair of yellow rubber flip-flops for his blonde-headed dream's dirty feet under his black coat. A bill dropped at a truck-stop, mysteriously as Lucy slept in the back seat, oblivious to the bearded faces slowly working the wads of tobacco at the car windows, while a trucker reached down from his cab his long bare arm to the man in black. And Cal placed the black capsule upon his tongue and then drove several hundred miles past the wild palms of Louisiana, his eyes burning white over the dash.

August 8. Lucy woke to the sound of the *Cosmopolitan* fluttering in the hot wind from the open window. She did not open her eyes but lay, listening to the hum of Texas passing beneath



the black belly of the Cadillac. Three days on the road and she could smell Cal from the front seat.

Opening her eyes, she could see the back of Cal's head. Lucy noticed the deep leathery creases in his neck. She had not noticed them before. She had seen the red necks of old men in Statesboro, but never in the pages of *Cosmopolitan*. Lucy felt at the back of her own neck to see if she was developing creases.

She listened to the pictures of nice girls in nice clothes rustling in the hot wind from the open window.

August 9. The needle flickered above empty on the gas gauge when Lucy spotted the figure up ahead. Anything standing vertically in the horizontal waste was obvious at a distance of several miles. Cal gritted his golden smile and squinted his eyes trying to make it out.

Sitting on a suitcase bursting at the seams and held together by travel stickers, a strange sight awaited them. It wore baggy plaid trousers and an ill-fitting suit maybe from a mortuary close-out. Suspenders bright red, checked socks, even yellow plastic sunglasses.

Lucy laughed. She almost expected big floppy shoes or a round red nose. "Oh Cal, look at that. Did you ever see anything so funny," she squealed, grabbing at Cal's arm so he had to pull off the road.

The strange figure sat on the suitcase, legs stretched apart so the trousers flapped in the desert wind. A hitchhiker with a novelty shop rubber thumb twitching on the end of a small fist.

"Howdy, Ma'am," and a cardboard suitcase came through the window into the backseat. The two bumperstickers from Seaworld and Disneyworld, which held the ratty box together, burst and a menagerie of contents came spilling out. "Thought I might of had to walk the rest of the way if you all hadn't come along." Unperturbed, he crawled over Lucy, over the seat and sat in a pile of red wigs, tubes of makeup, various decks of cards, fake noses, a foot long cigar and

a Captain Marvel comic book. A big brass horn honked from beneath his floppy pants.

"My card, ma'am. You'll have to give it back when you're done 'cause it's the only one I got."

Lucy took the card, a simple index card crudely marked in a rainbow of Crayola Crayon colors.

Joey Jeeter  
Clown

She looked at the boy sitting in the back seat. His pimply face waited with expectation like the wide-eyed child staring up the chimney at the first of December. She laughed and gave him the pat on the head he wanted.

By this time, Cal had closed his mouth. He looked coolly in the mirror at this sudden passenger.

"Look Jeeter . . ."

"Joey Jeeter. What's your name?"

"I'm Lucy Wysocow and this here's Cal."

"Wait just one mo . . ."

"Where you going, Mr. Cal? If you don't mind. I'd like to ride to see my ma. Ain't seen her for six months now. In the clowning business for Mr. B. T. Barnum down in Florida. Graduated from Clown College with a degree in funning and running. Paper with my name on it, Joey Jeeter. Got it here somewhere."

"Well now I . . ." Cal squinted his eyes cool and colorless like a snake's, trying to squeeze a hiss in edgewise.

"You mean you're a real clown?" Lucy squealed.

"You betcha. Clown College in Florida. Got my name, Joey Jeeter, on a piece of paper signed by Mr. B. T. Barnum his self. Wanna see a real clown magic trick?"

He went digging through the crazy case again, more comic books and crayons, scraps of paper, polka dot underwear. Cal could not hold this boy's eyes in the mirror, flash the golden smile on him like he wanted. This guy was making Cal sick.

And the dumb blonde squealing like a kid on Saturday morning in front of the TV. "You come all the way from Florida? Where's your ma live?"

Joey Jeeter sat straight up, again honking the big brass horn. "My ma,

she lives in Hominy, Oklahoma. Mrs. R. D. Jeeter, Jr. I ain't seen her in six months. She don't read so good and I ain't good at lettering, so I ain't heard from her so I'm going to Hominy to show her my Clowning Degree. Say now, where you all going?"

The squeals went out of Lucy. She hadn't thought where they were going, following only the rustling pages of her magazine. Betty Wysocow sat with her head slumped on a bar in a corner of Lucy's mind. Mama.

"Oklahoma! Goddam it, Oklahoma! Where in the blazes of hell are you going, Jeeter? This is Texas almost into New Mexico!" Cal yelled. The pimples showed white on the boy's flushed face.

"We will take him to the next town with a bus station," Lucy said. "Joey ain't seen his ma in six months and I ain't seen mine for a long time."

"You wanna ride, you better have some money, Jeeter."

And Joey Jeeter's face shone as he reached up behind Cal's ear and removed an Eisenhower dollar. Cal's eyes popped wide open in spite of themselves, then narrowed into thin slits.

Miles of interminable desert, plain empty nothingness drained of all color with only the black dot scuttle of the Cadillac across it. Joey Jeeter tried card tricks on Lucy which never worked until he had consulted a greasy pamphlet, "Legerdemain: Fascinate your Friends." Lucy blew big bubbles from the gum in her mouth and burst them with laughter. Cal was pale as a dead man walking just to save on funeral expenses.

Joey Jeeter saw it first and leaned way over the front seat to point it out. A billboard in the waste emblazoned:

## NATIONAL LANDMARK AHEAD

with a picture of the Golden Arches of McDonald's.

An hour later, Cal reluctantly pulled into the sandy parking lot of the restaurant. A place big enough in this wasteland to have a traffic light, a few bars and a McDonald's, and he wanted a beer, not a milkshake. At least, it was air conditioned. Cal felt awfully hot.

Cal took the boy's money to get a few Big Macs, a Quarterpounder hold the onions, fries and vanilla shakes. Joey Jeeter scampered off to the restroom. Lucy laughed when he returned. "Joey, you're so funny!"

Joey Jeeter had painted his face in the john, white with big red lips, and clamped a floppy mop on his head for a wig. A group of Mexican children jumped around him shouting, "Ronaldo McDonald, si si, Ronaldo McDonald." He cavorted and winked, made funny faces, fell down and played dead with his arms and legs stuck

straight up, then shook the dirty little hand of each of his fans.

"Eats it up," Cal muttered as he sullenly chewed on his Big Mac.

Back in the car, Cal turned his colorless eyes on the rear view mirror at Joey's red smile dotted with mustard. Cal's hand was trembling as he reached in his black coat for the white capsules.

"Hey Jeeter, you want some candy?"

The boy's eyes shone like bright pennies. Cal slowly placed one of the capsules behind his golden teeth and

swallowed it slowly.

"CAL, NO!" Lucy screamed.

"Shut up," Cal bellowed, whirling around to grab at Joey. The white clown face cringed hideously as Cal shook it hard, trying to bruise it black and blue. Lucy screamed, beating Cal over the head with the *Cosmopolitan*.

"Cal! No! Cal! Cal!" she panted, until he shoved her hard against the window. She lay crumpled there, sobbing to her hurt, No No No.

At last Cal gave up trying to throttle Joey Jeeter who was on the floorboard, hiding his head, crying, "Don't



Taylor Dancy



hit me. Please don't hit me." Cal pulled out of the parking lot, throwing sand in the silent eyes of the Mexican children.

TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES,  
NEW MEX. 66

The sign stood a long ways in the distance, then suddenly flashed by.

Joey was still crying in his sleep on the floorboard in the back, his red paint smeared like blood from his mouth across his fat pastey cheeks.

Lucy pressed her face tighter against the cool glass, one hand twirling a strand of her limp hair as she listened to the rushing desert. She wouldn't look at Cal, never again. Never, never, she hummed to her hurt.

They lay together beneath the flickering neon tail of the rattlesnake. The heat of the desert day dissipated into the hard cold night. Comforting each other, stroking each other's bruises in the darkness, the whispered why, why. "Why did he hurt me, Lucy? Why did he hurt me?"

She stroked his hair. The chalk from his face glowed on the tips of her cool fingers. She did not know why. Truth or Consequences, New Mex., being reached, Cal had began muttering about a Holiday Inn. His hands shook, his face was as colorless as his eyes. "Whooee boy, Holiday Inn! Ain't that right, little Lucy? Old Jeeter boy gonna treat us to the best room in the Holiday Inn!"

The world's innkeeper, however, did not keep house in this hamlet on the edge of the desert. Only the neon sign of the Sidewinder Inn crawled across the night, Vacancy written across its coils.

Cal was inside the office now, the sweat burning his forehead under his hat while his spine froze with the desert at his back.

"He doesn't like me. He's a bad man. He treats me mean because I want to be a clown. I went to Florida to learn clowning. They laughed at me like he done, mean laughing to hurt

you, not the good laughing like kids makes when you make them happy.

"The clowns with the happy faces, they spit at me and called me dummy and Okie and mean things it hurts you to hear a clown say. I never laughed once in Florida. They made me sweep up after the elephants. They knew I wasn't real smart. They told me to stand under an elephant once when it raised its tail. Them happy faced clowns laughed and laughed when the shit knocked me down. Only one, a sad-faced clown with red tears painted at his eyes, helped me. It got all in my nose and mouth and ears.

"There is your face, clown!" they laughed. 'Shitface the Clown. Shitface the Clown.'

"I lied to you, Lucy. I only wanted you to laugh. Why did he try to hurt me, why? Why are you going round with a man like that, Lucy?"

Lucy saw the golden smile at the window.

"Well, little Lucy, you and Jeeter boy having fun there in the backseat? Why don't we just all go into room 10. Jeeter can treat us to a bottle of booze and we can all have fun."

Cal's white hand dangled the key from its black plastic holder before their eyes.

They moved into the room unsurely, standing apart from each other divided by lumpy beds. Cal closed the door behind him and leaned against it.

Lucy hadn't seen him like this before, his hands trembling, drained of color, the muscles tight at the sides of his face. He stood up suddenly, took off his black wide brimmed hat and ran a hand through his sparse hair. There was a ring on his sweaty forehead from the heat.

Lucy had never seen Cal like this. She looked at Joey Jeeter sitting on the bed with his cardboard suitcase bound with the bumperstickers between his knees. Cal had started pacing the room. Lucy decided to wash her clothes.

She stuck her bubblegum on the sink beside the wrapped bar of soap stolen from a Holiday Inn. The towels were Holiday Inn too. The door, she had left open. She could see the last

part of Cal's pace down the room. Each time he walked past, his arms were moving wilder above his head.

"Whooeee Jeeter boy. Whooeee little Lucy. I feel good. We're going to have some fun. Jeeter boy gonna show me some tricks like you showed Lucy? Huh, Jeeter boy! Let me see that clown diploma. Show me something out of that bag of tricks."

She leaned over the sink to stare in the mirror. Her face was puffy. Her Allman Bros. T-shirt was faded so you could hardly make out the name. She slipped off her shirt, bikini top and panties and put them in the sink, filling it with water.

"Whooeee, look at little Lucy!" Cal leaned in the door with either arm against the sill.

She stared back into those colorless eyes until the golden smile disappeared.

Lucy walked naked past Cal, past Joey and climbed under the sheets on the lumpy bed, turning her back on them both.

Cal walked to the foot of her bed, then back to the bathroom, then back to her bed. He felt bad, he couldn't stop his hands from shaking. The neon rattlesnake crawling across the sky slithered behind a part in the beige curtains.

He grunted as he pulled the chain out of the wall that guarded the TV. Wheezing, bent backwards, he lugged the set into the bathroom and plugged it into the light over the mirror.

"Hey Jeeter boy, come here. Maybe some cartoons on for you. Come 'ere, boy!"

He stepped back into the tub. Fumbling, he turned on the shower. The spray of water dripped off the brim of his black hat. He looked down at the tub and it rushed up to meet him.

Static over static moving across the screen, flipping by in dark bands. Reptiles lounging in the sun, bending slowly across rocks, flicking their tongues. Some fool explaining in a schoolteacher's voice the feeding habits of the Gila monster.

"Gila monster lizards, Jeeter boy! Look at that sucker. Whooeee! Gila Monsters at the Sidewinder Inn in

Truth or Consequences, New Mex. Think you retard! I oughta throw you outside where them Monsters gonna bite your ass and not let you go until the sun rises, hell!" His voice cracked at Joey Jeeter standing at the door watching the lizards cut off screen into an insurance commercial.

The water got in his eyes. Lizards and snakes and the smeared white face of Jeeter boy blurred into static. The water felt bad as heavy sweat. Cal lurched forward to change the channel.

"LUCY!"

She ran naked to the bathroom, bumping into Joey Jeeter at the door. Cal lay in the bathtub in a swirling pool of water. The TV set lay across his hips as the circuits hissed. Cal's body was still jiggling obscenely although Cal was dead. His eyes were turned up at last to the show the bloodshot red of the undersides. The shower slowly carressed the thin wisps

of hair on his skull, while his hat floated upside down. The fingertips of one hand flung over the side of the tub were blackened and smoking.

They panicked at the same time. Joey Jeeter wormed under the bed, sobbing wildly, like some dumb animal screaming its vocal cords taut as wire. "Don't hurt me. Ple-ase don't hurt me."

Lucy screamed out the door to the desert. She fell on the cement porch and lay there what seemed a long time, listening to Joey's crying through his drool under the bed.

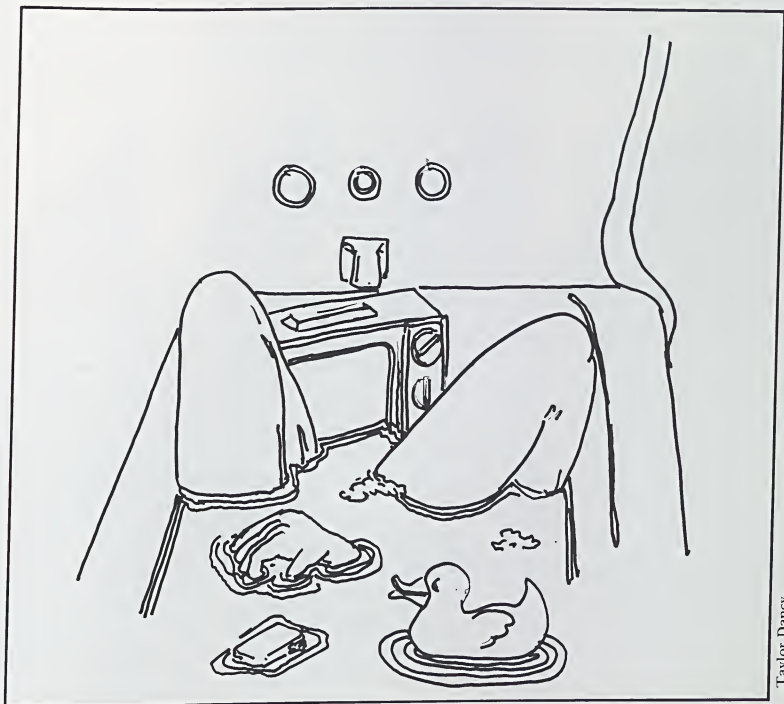
Lucy Wysocow then sat up and crossed her legs, feeling the night air turn her shudders of emotion into plain cold. She looked at her nakedness and smelled the musk of her own body between her legs. Strange thoughts came to her. Five days on the road and she had come further than she had in sixteen years. High school in Statesboro so far away started in two weeks,

so near. She thought about the prom next spring. She thought of Cinderella and fairy tales.

Lucy's fairy tales lay rolled up in the *Cosmopolitan* under the bottle of speed in the glove compartment. The car was in the parking lot, with strange popping noises under the hood, cooling in the night.

But she knew other fairy tales besides the banshee cry of the clown under the bed and the dancing body of the Black Prince in the bathtub. Once upon a time, once upon a time, there lived in a castle a little girl, a pretty little girl with long blonde hair and she lived in that castle, waiting for a true knight on a big roan stallion come to rescue her. And once upon a time, once upon a time, Lucy told the story to her only listener, the cold hard blue of the desert night, until the flashing red sirens of the sheriff's cars answered her.

the end





# Rome

## I

She gently touches the brown hair on  
Her legs, as if checking for broken glass.  
"We won't find anything, you know. We  
Haven't a chance." I'm angry, angry  
With **The Treasures of Pompeii**, with the  
Gross drawing of Paul on an  
Inverted cross, sprawled on our bed.  
"Sure," she says, her German  
Voice chopping the words like  
A typewriter. "Sure. Tomorrow we'll see  
Rome. Tomorrow we'll conquer Rome." She  
Smiles, pours from a bottle of mineral  
Water into a glass crusted white  
As if it had once held semen. Her  
Voice is a man-o-war sting. I kick  
Over Paul, ruin Pompeii, and lean back.

## II

Agrippus returns, and thousands of  
Stinking mouths scream his name. An  
Old Greek stands behind him, his  
Fig-arm holding a wreath above  
The hero's head. "You are  
But a man," he reminds. The crowd breaks  
Rank, rushes the hero. I am one of  
Them. The white horses panic, straining  
Against the general's grip. I fight  
Against them to grab a  
Bit, to steady the animals.

## III

I first notice my hand, raised  
Up like a curious child's. Below,  
Empty buses. I read their bright  
**Cinzano** ads defaced by circled A's and  
"basta con la merda". I drink from the  
Rotten vermouth by the alarm, and  
Slip back to sleep. But not before  
She sighs a bit, breathing a small  
Island of saliva on the pillow.

*by Stephen Amidon*

# The Music Wing: When?

When the planners of the James Ralph Scales Fine Arts Center first envisioned the complex, they foresaw the development of a building that would provide the Art, Theater, and Music departments with first-rate facilities. What they could not foresee were the soaring costs of building materials and labor which forced the postponement of the construction of the wing for the neglected Music department. The need for the music wing was less immediate than the need for the growth of the theater and art facilities. Consequently, the Music department still occupies its echoing corridors and rooms of Wingate Hall.

The two prior phases of the building, the theater facilities and the art studios and classrooms, have been completed. Now the future of the music wing commands attention. The first two phases cost the entire endowment of six million dollars originally earmarked for the completion of all three stages. The One-Fifty Fund, created in 1972, will raise the capital necessary to initiate the long-overdue construction of the music wing. Since the fund is not utilized for operating expenses, the university's re-examination of its financial priorities following the change in its relationship to its previous Baptist Convention patrons will not affect the financing. Provost Edwin Wilson assures the funding of the music wing, in time: "Historically we have not provided the

Music department with what they deserve. The music wing is our major physical need. I think the money can and will be raised."

The wing's projected cost is four million dollars. This estimate will vary with the runaway rate of inflation, and is based on the expectation that changes in the blueprint will only marginally affect the cost of construction. Each postponement of the start of construction means a new disappointment for the Music department and forces substantial increases in construction costs. If the new wing is to be completed by Wake Forest's sesquicentennial anniversary in 1984, the project must be started by 1981.

Since completion of the first two phases, the administration and the faculty have been edging towards initiating work on the music wing. Charles Allen, professor of Biology and the head of the building committee; Bill Joyner, vice-president of development, and the Music department faculty are working to revise the plans to surmount problems encountered in the construction of the earlier theater and art facilities. The plans need to foresee the development of interest in music, provide adequate room for instrumental and vocal practice sessions, and create a stimulating atmosphere which will encourage the aesthetic tastes of both music students and enthusiasts. Proper acoustics are the foremost signs of the blend of the building to the pursuit of musical excellence, stimulating or inhibiting the value of the tonal qualities which are among the paramount considerations of any performer/musician.

The plans to fulfill these goals provide a distinct contrast to the inadequate facilities the Music department currently uses. The department has only one classroom, preventing the simultaneous scheduling of two classes. Rooms serving as nurseries on Sundays are full of cribs and toy boxes; during the week they serve as makeshift practice rooms for aspiring musicians. The rooms are acoustical nightmares, resounding with echoes and allowing the strains of the fight song to mingle with the explications of the current and past religious thought

going on in Wait Chapel.

The proposed facility that will eliminate such integration forms a great key-shaped figure, extending from the front lobby of the current building and rising towards the men's dorms. The teeth of the key will be enclosed in an elevated rectangle building which will feature plenty of practice rooms. The main building will be square and low, balancing the sharp vertical lines of the theater and art wings.

A choral rehearsal room containing one hundred seats and a six-hundred seat general auditorium will compose one level of the main building. Downstairs, practice rooms, storage rooms for uniforms and instruments, offices, and a music library will provide further desperately needed facilities. Adjacent to the second story auditorium on the upstairs level will be ensemble rooms, studios, classrooms, and listening rooms. This arrangement combines all parts of the music program—teaching, performing and practicing—in 50,000 square feet. The present center is 80,000 feet in size, and the new, combined facility will cover 130,000 square feet.

The proposed 80,000 square foot building makes all the difference in the world to the music department, but if the economics are not worked out, and the plans remain in a constant state of revision and no action, it might as well be 100 square feet. As the theater and its facilities benefit the whole college, so will the music facilities, providing additional room for seminars, lectures, exhibits, or other special programs vital to university life. It seems a great pity that physical limitations should prohibit the vitality and aesthetic growth, not only of the music department, but of the entire university.

---

*This is the last in a three-part series of articles on the James Ralph Scales Fine Arts Center.*



# THERE AND BEYOND

Away  
From the harsh, slushy pavement,  
To the wooded spot.

Down the short, steep, snowy slope,  
Grabbing a quiet bush while you slip.

White silence of a discovered world,  
In which you are willingly enveloped.

A few yards beyond is a knoll,  
On which stands a miniature forest of tall, dark pines.

Perfectly straight,  
With perfect lines of white down the same sides.

And then you may find an open circle of whiteness,  
Around which the woods seem to encircle.

Or then spot a scene of curving and jumbled vines,  
That are falling over a grounded trunk.  
A curious abstraction,  
Which you will spot,  
And forge far to see up close.

In search for the unseen,  
The spirit arousing beauty.  
And in search to be in search.  
To be that unpatterned line,  
Who looks beyond the patterned.

*by Jackie Werth*

# Air

I am not drunk —  
it is the fever of breathing thin air.  
not the heavy air that oozes off leaves,  
but thin rarified air  
that, created from white powders,  
slowly smothers the anemic scholars.

I lean on nothing and drop  
in endless nauseous falls—  
throwing my head backward into infinity,  
but boring me with my own conversation  
and a blatantly finite number of truths.

It is the air that convulses me  
pitches me forward,  
and causes me to empty myself  
in your lap.

*by David Brian Marshall*

# Soap

On T.V.

For: dishes  
clothes  
baby's bath

Dr. Spock

Tick-Tock  
Time slowly snatches life away

Silver shopping carts  
In and out she darts

Among linoleum aisles

Pick a better peanut butter

Her boredom is utter  
Hell!

Save her! She's sinking:

In a pile of  
Dirty clothes

Wipes her child's nose

Don't let her drown!  
She'll go down  
Slipping on the soap

*by Mary Boone*



# From Innocence to Experience: A Journey With Knowledge

by Missy Ginter

*In this paper, I am investigating stereotypes in children's books. I became interested in this topic because I am planning to teach school one day. I entered this investigation with only one hypothesis: that stereotypes have decreased in more modern (after 1970) books. I randomly picked and examined nine books or stories which children may read.*

*In conclusion, my initial hypothesis*

*proved to be true, with some modifications. Stereotypical bounds are broken the more unreal and imaginative the character is; the character Pippi Longstocking is an example of this rule. The other modification I discovered is that although the more modern books are less stereotypical, they still do not accurately represent the total population; Mexicans, Jews, Indians, Irish, and others were not depicted in the modern books I read.*



Mark Warren

Once upon a time, there was a little person named Innocence. He lived with his mama and daddy in a big house way out in the country. His mom was an engineer, and his dad taught school. Both had to drive a long way to get to their jobs in the city. Innocence loved his parents very much, but he was lonely since they worked and commuted so much. Their country home was very beautiful, but Innocence became lonely without any playmates.

When Innocence was three years old, Daddy taught him to read. He loved to read, but he also wished he had someone to talk to. For his fifth birthday, his parents gave him a dog to play with and to talk to. Innocence was delighted. He named the dog Knowledge, because she had large, alert, intelligent eyes. Innocence and Knowledge would run and play outside until they were very tired. Then Innocence would go inside and read out loud to the dog while she relaxed on her favorite rug.

One day Innocence was reading "Cinderella" to Knowledge. When Innocence finished reading the fairy tale, he said to Knowledge, "What a nice, happy story! I hope you enjoyed it!" He patted Knowledge on the head and stretched out beside her on the rug.

Knowledge lazily yawned and then licked her lips. "Yes," she said quietly. "I like that fairy tale too. It is an excellent example of a typical fairy tale."

Innocence thought about what Knowledge had said for a second. Then he suddenly bolted upright and looked with surprised-filled eyes at his pet. "What! How? Why? Dogs can't talk!" he exclaimed.

"Hum," explained Knowledge, "all animals talk, but only a few can communicate with humans on their level. Let's just say that I'm magic, that I have a caring fairy godmother like Cinderella."

Innocence was amazed, dumbfounded. He had a thousand questions which were all trying to formulate at once. Knowledge watched the boy pacing and groping for words. She tried to ease his perplexity a little.

"At this time, I cannot explain to

you why I can talk and think as you do. You will just have to accept my abilities until I can explain. And you must not tell anyone about my abilities. Keeping secrets is hard to do, but you must if we are to remain friends. I know I can trust you."

Innocence was very confused, excited, and perplexed, but he promised to faithfully keep Knowledge's secret. He tried to suppress all his questions, but one burst out. "Why, after all these weeks that we have played together, did you choose to talk to me now?"

A slight smile became visible on Knowledge's face. "I can explain that to you. These past weeks we have been playing together, I have been watching you and learning about you. You are a very intelligent, kind child, but you need to learn some very important things before you go to school next year. We will work together to prepare you for school. I can help you. I want to help you because I love you."

Innocence was still puzzled and excited, but he was also a very open, accepting child. "Oh, Knowledge, I'm so glad that I have a real friend. I will keep your secret. And I want you to help me learn. I love you, too!" Innocence gave Knowledge a big, warm hug, and Knowledge affectionately licked Innocence's face.

Their hug lasted a moment; then Knowledge broke it up. "Innocence, you have lived in this beautiful house way out in the country all your life. The only people you know are your parents. So before you go to school, I want to teach you about different people. Since you love to read, the best way to teach you is through books. Let's begin with 'Cinderella.' First of all, look at the pictures. What color are the people in this story?"

Innocence looked and replied. "White. All the people in this book of twenty-three fairy tales are white. But why does color matter?"

"Just trust me. I'm directing you in an investigation which won't be clear to you for some time. Just answer my questions and try to remember the answers. O.K. White people are depicted through the pictures. Who are



Mark Warren

the main characters in 'Cinderella' and what are they like?"

Innocence thought. "Well, Cinderella is the main character. She is beautiful, patient, and obedient. She accepts whatever happens to her and does nothing to make her miserable life better. She does the dirty housework and helps her step sisters get beautiful for the ball without complaining. The step sisters are rude and mean to Cinderella. They are very concerned about how they look. It says on page 74, 'The two sisters went almost two days without eating . . . They broke more than a dozen laces trying to be laced up tightly so they might have fine slender shapes, and were continually at their looking glasses.' The step mother is mean and wicked. The godmother is kind and magical. The father is passive, and the Prince loves Cinderella for her beauty. He marries her and rescues her from her miserable life."

Knowledge was impressed by the perceptive ability of Innocence. "Do you remember when I said that this story was a typical fairy tale? Well, the characters of a typical fairy tale are like the ones in this story: a good mom who had died, a passive father, a wicked woman like the step mother, a pure, beautiful maiden in some kind of trouble, and a knight or prince who

solves the maiden's problems and saves her. 'Cinderella,' 'Snow White,' and 'Christabel,' which is a poem by Coleridge, all have these types of characters. One last question. When was this story written and by whom?"

Innocence did not know the answer to this question. Knowledge told him that it was written about 1700 by Charles Perrault. Then she said, "We are going to look at books through a progression of time. Tomorrow, we will read *The Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. Now, I'd like something to eat."

"Me too!"

Innocence and Knowledge ate, talked, and played the rest of the day. Innocence slept very contentedly that night.

The next morning Innocence and Knowledge ate a good breakfast and played for a while. Then they took *The Little Prince* with them to a spacious, green field where Innocence read it aloud. When he finished, Innocence exclaimed, "What a happy, sad, beautiful book!"

"Yes," said Knowledge. "But let's examine it more closely. When did Saint-Exupéry write this book?"

"He wrote it in 1943. Why?"

"Never mind now. Let's examine



the characters. The little prince is the main character. What's he like?"

Innocence thought. "He's a little, sensitive boy. He's very inquisitive and imaginative. He's very wise — much wiser than people on this planet. For example, he understands the essence of life. Let me read to you how wise he is.

"The thing that is important is the thing that is not seen. . . . It is just as it is with the flower. If you love a flower that lives on a star, it is sweet to look at the sky at night. All the stars are a-bloom with flowers. . . . It is just as it is with the water. Because of the pulley, and the rope, what you gave me to drink is like

music. . . . And at night you will look up at the stars. Where I live everything is so small that I cannot show you where my star is found. It is better, like that. My star will be just one of the stars, for you. And so you will love to watch all the stars in the heavens. . . . They will all be your friends. And besides, I am going to make you a present. . . ."

He laughed again.

'In one of the stars I shall be living. In one of them I shall be laughing. And so it will be as if all the stars were laughing, when you look at the sky at night. . . . You — only you — will have stars that can laugh!' (pp. 84-85)

Knowledge was impressed because Innocence picked a beautiful, true passage to show the wisdom of the little prince. Knowledge remained silent for a moment.

"Am I right?" Innocence asked.

Knowledge recovered from her daydreaming. "Yes, you were. Now let's look at this story from a different approach. Give me a brief summary of the story."

"The little prince lives on a very small planet. The most beautiful thing on the planet is a rose, and the little prince loves her. But the rose troubles the little prince, so he journeys to many strange planets with many strange people on them; he is trying to discover how to handle the rose. On earth, he meets a fox who shares a secret with the little prince. This secret enables the little prince to understand his rose, so he begins his return journey home. In the desert, the little prince and the narrator meet, and through the narrator, the story is told."

Knowledge said, "Good, Innocence. Tell me about this rose."

Innocence searched his memory. "Well, the rose is very beautiful, but she is also proud and vain. She seems to play games with the little prince, because she hides her true feelings of love from him. I think that she is insecure. Anyway, she thinks she is the only rose in the universe. She is demanding, and she knows that her four little thorns will protect her from any danger, such as a tiger. On earth, the little prince sees a field of five thousand roses. He says that his rose would pretend to be dying, because she would be terribly embarrassed."

"Very good," Knowledge replied. "Are there any other female characters in this book?"

"No other major characters."

"Who are the male characters?"

"Well, there is the narrator. He's very sensitive, and loves the little prince. The narrator is an airplane pilot. The other male characters are the Sheep, the King, the Conceited Man, the Tippler, the Businessman, the Lamplighter, the Geographer, the Railroad Switchman, and the Merchant. The Fox is male. He gives the



Mark Warren

little prince the treasured secret, which is: 'It is only with the heart that one can see rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eye' (p. 70). Also, the snake, who gives the little prince the freedom to return home through death, is male."

"O.K. What color are all these people?"

"In the pictures, they are white again."

"Well, we've done enough for today," said Knowledge. "Tomorrow, we'll read another book."

The next day Innocence read *Pippi Longstocking*. After he finished reading, he said to Knowledge, "I know what you're going to ask. This book was written by Astrid Lindgren in 1950. All the pictures show white people. Next, you'll want me to tell you about the characters, but I wish I knew why."

"You'll understand later. Now proceed."

"Pippi is the main character. She is not an ordinary girl, because she is very strong, independent, and innovative. She's only nine years old, but she lives by herself and takes care of herself. And she is smarter than grownups, because she figures out a way to save two children from a fire when the grownups can't. She does not conform to society; she cannot adjust to school and she wants to be a pirate when she grows up."

Innocence continued. "Pippi's friends are Annika and Tommy. Annika wears pretty dresses, gets scared and cries. Tommy is brave, likes new adventures, and wears neat pants and shirts. Both are obedient, nice children."

"What about the other characters?" Knowledge inquired.

"The female characters include the schoolteacher, the tightrope walker, and the horserider at the circus, and Tommy's and Annika's mother. The male characters are the strongman at the circus, the policemen, the circus master, the burglars, and the firemen."

"Good," Knowledge exclaimed. "Two more questions about this book. Tell me about the tea party and the presents Annika and Tommy receive

from Pippi."

"At various times, Pippi gives her friends presents. She gave Annika a red coral necklace, a broach, and a jewel box with pink shells on it and a ring inside it. Pippi gave Tommy an ivory flute, a notebook, and a dagger. Let me see what I remember about the tea party. Tommy's and Annika's mother had some ladies over. They ate cakes, sipped coffee, and complained about their maids. Pippi was invited, and she told the ladies about her grandmother's maid Malin. Pippi thought that Malin was a black person at first, but later Pippi found out that Malin was white; she looked dark-skinned because she never took baths."

Knowledge nodded in approval. "You covered all the important points I wanted you to notice in this book. Now let's run and play."

As they were racing across the field, Innocence thought to himself. "Knowledge wants me to notice the same old thing about every book. She wants me to know the author, when the book was written, the color of the people in the book, and which characters are male and which ones are female. I wonder why. I wonder if men are supposed to act one way and women are supposed to act another way. I wonder..." Because Innocence was wondering so much and because he had only two legs, Knowledge won the race. Innocence was not mad, though, and he and Knowledge played happily the rest of the day.

The next day, Innocence and Knowledge read and studied *The Baseball Trick* written by Scott Corbett in 1965. There were no black people in any of the book's pictures. There was one woman in a picture; her name was Mrs. Graymalkin, and she was the only developed female character in the book. Mrs. Graymalkin was witch-like. She dressed in black, took walks at dusk to look for toadstools, and she gave Kerby and Fenton, the two main characters, a secret magic potion so the boys could win the baseball game against their rivals. Although Kerby's team wins the game, the potion does not work exactly like it should. The

other women characters mentioned are Mrs. Pembroke, an old woman who lives beside Kerby with her cat, Mrs. Scofield who hires one of the boys to cut her grass, and Kerby's mother who discusses clothes with a friend. Even though Mrs. Graymalkin gives the boys the potion for the game, she knows nothing about baseball; she plays cribbage and exchanges recipes in her spare time. All the female characters are married.

There are about fifteen male characters in the book. Doc Browley owns a candy store. Kerby's father discusses golf and chemistry with his friend and helps Fenton learn to hit. Mr. Caldwell umpires the baseball games. Both the dogs in the story are male. The boys' lives are filled with baseball. Fenton is portrayed as a very smart, scientific boy. The boys are independent, innovative, intelligent, and investigative.

"Knowledge," Innocence complained, "I'm tired of reading books and discussing the same old thing about them. Are you ever going to get to the point?"

"Yes, child. As a matter of fact, now is the perfect time to get to the point. I want you to tell me about the world of people that these stories portray."

"Well, O.K. As you have so often pointed out, none of the characters are black. If I were creating a world based on these books alone, all the people would be white. There would be men and women, boys and girls in my world. All of the women would be very beautiful, and they would all have children (or baby roses) at some point in their lives and a house to take care of. I guess that's all they would do. Some women could play games with their men, like the rose, and others could discuss clothes, recipes, and their maids with their friends. They would have to accept life as it came to them without complaining too much. Pippi would have to remain a child all her life in this world; she would never fit into the mold of regular women, because Pippi is so strong and fantastical that she doesn't even need magic to solve her problems!"

"Based on these books, then, women in your world would be white



mothers and housekeepers. They would be passive and accepting. They would remain in the background making their children and husbands happy while hoping for magic to solve problems that they could not solve for themselves. What would the men be like?"

"Oh, men are different. Of course they would be white too, but they could do many things. They could be kings or princes, baseball players, business executives, drunks, whatever they wanted. They could be alone or married, but the women must marry. The men would be very smart and creative and independent."

Knowledge smiled to herself; she knew that Innocence would be easy to teach. "Ah, I see." Knowledge said with a laughing glimmer in her eyes.

"Dear Innocence, is your world with your parents like the one you just created?"

Innocence reflected deeply. "Of course not," he said meditatively. "Mama has dark skin and shiny black curly hair. She doesn't stay home with me, and both her and Daddy take care of me and the house. Daddy tells me sometimes that he feels threatened because Mama makes more money than he does. I don't know what that means, but sometimes they fight and Daddy calls Mama a 'nigger' and Mama calls Daddy a 'spic'. I hate when they fight."

"So your real world is not at all like the world shown by the books we have read. These stories cover a time span of 265 years, from 1700-1965. Why do you think I asked you about who

wrote the books?"

"All of them are white men except for Astrid Lindgren. She is a Swede described as a 'story-telling mother' on the back of the book. Does this information fit into our world created from these books?"

"It sure does!"

Knowledge knew that now was the time to make her point very clear. "Innocence, do you know what a stereotype is?"

"No."

"According to DeVito, a stereotype is a perceptual shortcut. A person uses a perceptual shortcut to organize all his or her perceptions of different people. For example, a little prince may see a rose. Since this little prince loves his special rose, he looks at a different rose and thinks it is beautiful and that he likes it. Now let me give you an example for the real world. A black man is seen by a white woman. The woman has been taught by her society that black people are stupid, shiftless, mean, and hateful. She has been taught that they are fit for only low status positions in society, so this woman slides her perception of this black man into her brain slot of black people who are mean, stupid, shiftless, hateful and of low social status without even getting to know him. Stereotypes can be good like with the rose or bad like with the black man."

"I understand now. All those books we read upheld the male-female stereotypes and the stereotypes of the dominant, no, exclusive, white world. Even the last book we read, *The Baseball Trick*, adhered to the stereotypes even though at the time it was written, black people were actively demanding civil rights and women were fighting for their liberation. See, these authors are very stereotypical, aren't they?"

Knowledge beamed. "You are perceptive. Traditionally, women have had the mother-housekeeper role in society and blacks have been placed at the low end of the status pole. But you know that all those stereotypical generalizations are changing. You have a black engineer for a mother and a Mexican Spanish teacher for a father. And fortunately, the media are changing. Can you think of any



Mark Warren

examples of the media presenting an integrated, fair world?"

"Hum," Innocence thought. "How about *Sesame Street*? The world of that show is fair and integrated. Blacks and whites and blues (Cookie Monster) and yellows (Big Bird) and greens (Kermit) all work and learn together. Each muppet exemplifies a positive stereotype. Let Cookie Monster be an example. He loves cookies, but he also likes things like apples and zucchini. He speaks in monster language: 'ME want COOKIE!' His speech is simple and direct, not standard English, so children who watch him realize that people talk differently but that communication, not manner of speech, is important. Cookie Monster's search for food shows people ways to solve problems. Cookie Monster is single-minded about food, but he shares his beloved cookie with a crying little girl; her happiness caused by eating the cookie is better than the cookie for Cookie Monster" (p. 12-13 *The Muppet Gallery*).

"*Sesame Street* is a great example."

"Thanks. I also read ahead a little. I read a book called *Grownups Cry Too* written in 1973. The theme is that everyone cries at some time; parents aren't perfect. In this book, the mom and the child are dark-skinned. They look Indian. The father is white. Both this book and another book I read were written by women. *Just Momma and Me* was written in 1975. It is a very modern book for children. Regina is adopted by her mom. Then Momma's friend Karl moves in and Regina feels threatened. Mom becomes pregnant, and Keithy is born. Regina adjusts to the threat of losing Mom's love to Karl and Keithy. The book never tells whether Karl and Mom get married. This family is white, and Mom is an artist. The family's next-door neighbors and friends are black. I think that modern literature for children is more realistic, less stereotypical."

Joy and sadness crossed Knowledge's face at the same time. "I'm proud of you, Innocence. You have learned well. Now, I want to give you a few words of advice . . . When you go to school, teachers may have you read books with bad stereotypes in them.



Mark Warren

Since children can and do learn to accept bad stereotypes, you should very politely ask your teacher to either use other books or to explain to the children that the world is full of different kinds and colors of people who can be and do whatever they choose. Also, if some of your classmates are unkind to you because of the color of your skin, be extra nice and patient with them; try very hard to communicate with them so they can learn to accept you as you are, not as they may think you are."

"O.K. I'll do as you say, but why are you telling me these things now? You aren't going somewhere, are you?" Innocence asked fearfully.

"Yes, I must. I have served my purpose here. You see, I used to be a black woman. I was professor at a famous university. Among other things, I tried to teach my students to accept and love each other as individual people. But too many of my students and colleges used color, sex, social status or age for the basis of their love. I was fired from my job because of social pressure against black women. I was very mad at first. Time eased my bitterness a little. Then I read about an extraordinary operation in a far country. After much thought, I took all my savings with me to this country. The doctor, Ms. Peace, was the sweet yel-

low-skinned person who operated on me. In the operation, I had my human body destroyed, and my soul and mind were placed in this body which you see. I had the operation so I could talk to children and teach them to love openly before their attitudes are destroyed by bad stereotypes and prejudice. I must go on now to other children." A tear dropped from the corner of Knowledge's eye. She turned away, embarrassed.

Innocence gave her a big hug. "I love you, Knowledge. I respect you very deeply for what you're doing, and I will carry your message to my school. I will help you."

"Thank you, dear. I have two presents for you before I go. One is a book on your bed. I hope you enjoy it. The other is my new name for you: Experience . . . Experience of Equality, because that is what you have given me and that is what I wish for you in life. I love you, Experience of Equality. I must go now."

These two extraordinary creatures hugged one last time. Experience sadly watched Knowledge trot down the road. "Good luck!" he whispered after her.

That night Experience picked up the book Knowledge had given him. He began reading.



black is brown is tan  
 is girl is boy  
 is nose is face  
 is all the colors  
 of the race  
 is dark is light  
 singing songs  
 in singing night  
 kiss big woman hug big man  
 black is brown is tan  
 this is the way it is for us  
 this is the way we are (p. 4-7 Adoff)

Experience of Equality was very glad  
 that Knowledge had been and would  
 always be his friend.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adoff, Arnold. *Black is brown is tan*. New York: Harper and Row, 1973.
- Corbett, Scott. *The Baseball Trick*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1965.
- Cushman, Dean, editor. *The Muppet Gallery*. New York: Children's Television Workshop, 1978.
- Eber, Christine Engla. *Just Momma and Me*. Chapel Hill, North Carolina: Lollipop Power, Inc., 1975.
- Hazen, Nancy. *Grownups Cry Too*. Chapel Hill, North Carolina: Lollipop Power, Inc., 1973.
- Lindgren, Astrid. *Pippi Longstocking*. New York: Viking Press, 1950.
- Perrault, Charles. "Cinderella" *The World's Best Fairy Tales*. New York: The Reader's Digest Association, 1965.
- Sadker, Myra Pollack and David Miller. *Now Upon a Time: A Contemporary View of Children's Literature*. New York: Harper and Row, 1977.
- Saint-Exupery, Antoine de. *The Little Prince*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1943.



Mark Warren

# First Memory

I stand away  
as a boy shuffles through the gutter  
creating a wave,  
chasing it,  
moving like the wave, only see-saw, right  
left never lifting his feet,  
his head.

I step over  
the emptied shoes he discarded, overturned  
in this area —  
grass brighter than green,  
lime through an after-rain gauze. The street  
seems too pocked, too resolute,

and then, suddenly, silently  
the street is too close to a burning cheek,  
a bent knee.

I lean over  
his sagging head and his hidden face.  
I stare at a tiny red divot on his knee  
a perfect red bead  
on the top of a pale knob.

It is so close, but not intrusive  
not painful, but quiet  
and alone,  
and, with the sweep of a hand,  
reduced to white.

*by David Brian Marshall*



## Where Do They Keep The Church?

The ground hog must have seen  
His shadow in the spring  
Of my life. A winter  
Of loneliness and alienation  
Extended almost through my teens,  
Though I was incognizant.

My love life has been a bald spot,  
It came to me in two late, spring months.

Now the seasons have started to change.  
The unself-conscious warmth of friendship  
Thaws my ambition as I write.  
I've crossed many miles of acquaintances.  
Damn my passivity, I hope  
To be an equal friend to this one and one more.

Pardon Love, Your Church lives.

*by Birney Bull*

## My Lover Is A Verb

My lover is a verb  
athletic and coordinated  
word that dances on the  
border of exams and  
street signs.

Not an adjective like past  
lovers but  
sigh-splitting  
verb  
(I an adverb.)  
We freely poem about  
in journalistic love  
and punctuate the heavens  
with the stars.

Our once prose love  
has embraced itself  
into a poem  
which we recite  
each in our own words.

*by Kathy A. Clay*





# Catch

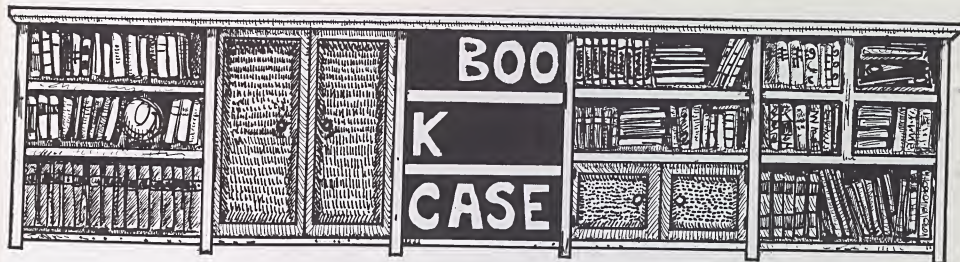
Paris. Here,  
beneath the spin of Arc de Triomphe traffic  
the metro crushes us in rush-hour haste.  
Two points of immobility: a tripod  
and the Arc. Below,  
our train becomes another static point.  
We wait,  
annoyed at unaccustomed rest.  
The sun falls,  
trembling, like a slow-motion drop of blood;  
the camera patiently whirs its long exposure.  
Then — we're late,  
we must find another train, this line is stopped;  
there's been a suicide.  
We curse this dead unknown  
whose blood stops steel,  
who, for a moment, paralyzes Paris,  
who, in hating Paris life enough  
makes, in death, his own existence cursed:  
the final vengeance

the shutter captures an arc of triumph in loops of light.

*by Susan Rogers*



Lauren Doyle - McGinnis



**DORIS LESSING**  
**Shikasta 365 pp. Knopf**  
**\$10.95**

Doris Lessing is not generally associated with the genre of science fiction. Her new work *Shikasta*, the first in a series generally entitled *Canopus in Argos: Archives*, is thus a new departure for her. Science fiction becomes a vehicle through which she expresses her perceptions about the nature of the human race. *Shikasta* is an ambitious and wide-ranging work; one both admires and is bewildered by a book that begins while Man is still swinging from the trees and ends in the aftermath of World War III.

*Shikasta* is written in the format of a textbook for "first year students of Canopean Colonial Rule." Canopus and its friendly rival Sirus are benevolent rulers of the galaxy. Canopus has chosen the planet Shikasta (Earth) as a world with excellent potential for fostering a peaceful, happy, long-lived race. With this in mind, Canopus transports to Shikasta a race called the Giants and introduces The Link, a sort of mind-meld that imbues the human race with the "Higher Mental" qualities. The results are good: the emergent humans, under the tutelage of the benevolent Giants, develop a completely harmonious culture.

But something goes wrong. The Shammat, an evil race that controls certain parts of the galaxy, also has an interest in Shikasta. Their presence on Earth results in a break in the Link and the happy lot of Man immediately

begins to deteriorate. The degeneration is rapid. The "Substance-Of-We-Feeling" that Canopus introduced through the Link is subverted and man becomes more and more bestial, savage, and war-like.

Canopus is not completely helpless; the planet sends its agents to help the humans out of darkness. One in particular, Johor, is the main character in the narrative. He travels from place to place in human form, giving instructions to those who will listen. These instructions are the ultimate source of Earth's religious beliefs today.

With this background established, Lessing focuses on the latter part of the twentieth century, particularly on the character of George Sherban. Sherban is actually Johor himself, born into a white family and educated by enlightened and humane Earthly parents. It is his destiny to open the eyes of Earthmen to the terrible conditions of their world, a difficult task on a planet "immune to truth."

Sherban/Johor becomes the vehicle through whom Lessing expresses her opinions about the state of modern life. She is particularly concerned with inequity: the shameful luxury of the West, especially the United States, contrasted with the degraded condition of the rest of the world. Her writing also reveals a feeling of deep shame over the disastrous results of Western imperialistic policy.

These are weighty matters. *Shikasta* is an extremely ambitious novel, attempting as it does not only to recount all of human existence as we have known it but also to deal with the most pressing of contemporary issues. At times Lessing's political viewpoints threaten to overwhelm the narrative.

There is more than a little preachiness in the novel. But the perceptions are acute, and Lessing generally manages to keep the narrative well-focused on the specific. For example, George Sherban is presented to us primarily through the journal of his younger sister Rachel. It is to Lessing's credit that she can so tellingly portray the mind of an adolescent girl in a time of troubles, while still maintaining a firm grip on her larger purposes.

Lessing's science-fictional premise is nothing new in these days of *Chariots of the Gods*. But Lessing takes this premise and develops it far beyond that of a typical adventure story. The work is both disturbing in its condemnation of man's condition and ultimately hopeful in its provision for individual action. Lessing is clearly a highly intelligent woman who has thought deeply about the modern world. The result, as we have it in *Shikasta*, is usually entertaining, sometimes bewildering in scope, occasionally strident, but always thought-provoking.

by Evelyn Byrd Tribble

**THOMAS KINSELLA**  
**Peppercanister Poems**  
**159 pp. Wake Forest**  
**University Press**  
**\$9.95 cloth, \$5.95 paper**

Thomas Kinsella sees ghosts. Be they thirteen civil rights demonstrators shot to death in Northern Ireland by British troops, JFK and Lee Harvey



Oswald, the Irish composer Sean O Riada, Kinsella's dead father or the more obscure, nameless spectres found throughout the poet's work, the dead are the touchstone of Kinsella's poetry. *Peppercanister Poems*, a collection of poetry printed at Kinsella's own Peppercanister Press from 1972 to 1978, is, above all else, an attempt at understanding the dead and laying them to their proper rest.

In an earlier work, "Notes From The Land Of The Dead," Kinsella introduced the notion of memory and understanding. Memory works as an instrument of understanding, holding on to that which has not been comprehended. Memory is the infinite pool of that which has not been understood. This explains Kinsella's (and our) ghosts. *Peppercanister Poems*, then, can be seen as a reliving of that which has not been understood, so that perhaps some kind of edification may take place. It is a fascinating poetic experience.

*Peppercanister Poems* carries out this project of memory and understanding to a greater extent than any of Kinsella's previous work. The collection's first poem, "Butcher's Dozen," is a bitter polemic written within a week after a tribunal found British troops innocent in a shooting incident which left thirteen protestors dead in Northern Ireland. The poet returns to the site of the massacre, seeking some sort of explanation. He encounters the dead and hears their stories. The British troops soon change from young men firing in self defense to a group of bloodthirsty murderers. The poem is simple and forceful, written in quick couplets. Its artlessness is balanced by a fine, bitter irony and a real sense of anger.

"A Selected Life" and "Vertical Man" are tributes to Sean O Riada, Ireland's premier composer of this century. The first is a series of stark memories of the musician's funeral, hinting at the inadequacy of the mourners. Here one encounters Kinsella's true style—at times musical, delighting the ear, yet punctuated by abrupt stops and starts, sometimes lapsing into the technical jargon of Kinsella's long time job as a bureau-

crat in the Irish government. This uneven style is not, however, a reflection of any poetic inadequacy. Rather, it is employed to illustrate our meager attempts at understanding. Through the language, one senses the artist's fundamental state of uncertainty, his wrestling with image and ideas. "Vertical Man" is a drunken remembrance of O Riada. Its too private images need explanation in the notes Kinsella attaches at the end of the volume. Even then, however, the poem offers little to the reader but some fine verbal affects.

"The Good Fight" is a long poem commemorating the tenth anniversary of the assassination of John Kennedy. It is a complex poem: constructed upon a juxtaposition of excerpts from Kennedy's speeches, the diary of Lee Harvey Oswald, Plato's *Republic*, various historical texts, and, of course, Kinsella's own poetry. Far from being confusing, however, this orchestrated voicing gives the poem a striking unity. Kennedy's optimism slides into Oswald's suicidal/homicidal ravings, with Plato all the while warning of the dangers of tyranny and violence. No one is blamed or exalted. With the shrill voices still ringing in the reader's ear, Kinsella concludes

*it is appropriate for us  
to proceed now and make our  
attempts  
in private, to shuffle off and  
disappoint  
Plato.*

It is through patience that we achieve understanding. Kinsella, acting as editor and as poet, seems to achieve an understanding of a time as destructive as it was optimistic.

"The Messenger" is a poem remembering the poet's father. Kinsella is more sideways in his approaches to this ghost, taking obscure paths toward a man he desperately wants to understand. The reader is given a unique portrait of a man: storyteller, "lumpenproletarian," politician, lover, father. At times the poem's imagery seems to stretch out and embrace an entire generation of Irishmen, while at other moments it presents

man as an individual. "The Messenger" successfully walks a fine line between distinction and generality, exploring the personality of a remarkable man while avoiding the sentimentality to which this type of poem is often subject.

Not all of Kinsella's ghosts have names and places in history. In "Phoenix Park," an earlier poem, Kinsella introduces the image of a child tearing mushrooms from the ground and coming to some sort of understanding by tasting them. Life is a hunger for love and understanding, but these cannot be achieved without destruction of some kind. Each new order achieved implies a higher order, thereby destroying itself, "till there's nothing to come." The works "One," "A Technical Supplement," and "Song of the Night," which complete the collection, deal with this gap between memory and understanding, between desire and love, between giving and tearing.

"One" is a mixture of infant memories and adult dreams. In places, it deals with simple memories: the hands of the poet's father, cats, other children, and learning to write. Elsewhere, there are barren descriptions of an unknown man, or perhaps a tribe, engaged in some sort of journey, some sort of quest. "One" is a diary of the individual's coming to consciousness, blending the poet's experience with a kind of mythic, racial experience. It is a process of the discovery of a unifying 'tissue.' When it begins,

*A maggot of the possible  
wiggled out of the spine  
into the brain.*

The poem ends with the individual achieving some partial knowledge.

*It knows  
only that it is nightmare-  
bearing tissue  
and that there are others.*

"A Technical Supplement" carries forward the idea of human hunger, setting down a series of images depicting man the carnivore. There is a

striking passage describing a slaughterhouse with documentary precision. Later, a lizard devours another, and a leopard shark preys on a school of fish. Man is somehow linked with all this: he too is a predator. Kinsella captures this in just a few words—words whose diction depicts this predatory nature better than anything else:

*The mind flexes.  
The heart encloses.*

"Song of the Night" is a move toward redemption after the visionary depths of "A Technical Supplement." The pure artistry of its language is the most immediate affect. These are poems of possibility—the possibility of love, even without understanding. Without each other, "A Technical Supplement" and "Song of the Night" would be dangerously lopsided works. Together, however, they balance one another, each justifying the excesses of the other.

*Peppercanister Poems* is not an easy volume to read. Not because Kinsella indulges in sophistry or vapid, cryptic images; rather, because it chooses for its subject the most difficult themes—the nature of memory, of understanding, of love. It is ultimately a fine book, for both poet and reader can achieve some kind of understanding—that the impulse toward understanding and the attempt to love may just be enough.

Stephen M. Amidon

---

**FRED HARWELL**  
**A True Deliverance: The Joan Little Case 287 pp.**  
**Knopf \$10.85**

---

Anyone even remotely associated with North Carolina will have, in all probability, some opinion concerning the murder trial of Joan Little, and this opinion is undoubtedly based on a vast array of misconceptions. Fred Harwell attempts to draw some sanity from the rampant mayhem hovering

around the celebrated case and is successful in his endeavor. He lays before the public, in an organized manner, testimonies, police reports, and press releases. One is made aware of the defense's blatant prostitution of the press, the discrepancies in Little's testimony, and the Washington editor's attempts to hide essential facts in the case. Harwell presents the facts concerning the case in an unemotional, unjudgmental manner. The reader is left the right to decide.

Joan Little, a young black woman, was quartered in a county jail in eastern North Carolina in 1974. A white guard was killed, and Little escaped. She says it was attempted rape. The prosecution says it was seduction used as a means to escape. These are the essential facts concerning the case which mushroomed into a national issue. Little's defense employed tactics emphasizing the racial aspects of the incident, arousing the undercurrent of malevolent emotions present between blacks and whites during the early seventies. Suddenly, the event that happened in "little Washington" had national appeal, and the defense loved it.

Harwell, J.D., uses the inherent drama of the courtroom scene to give his book a feeling of action and excitement. He devotes a great number of pages to discussion of the theory of defense and prosecution and opens a new realm of understanding to the layman. He dispels the myth that the jury decides between truth and fallacy; the jury, in Harwell's estimation, sides with the attorney who sets the scene best, who is most convincing. The reader, however, is given a myriad of facts to digest without the persuasive arguments of experienced counselors. At times the facts become jumbled and confusing, but nevertheless Harwell conveys the flavor of the job faced by a lawyer, that of ploughing nearly blindly through masses of information.

Harwell presents a coherent and honest discussion of a confusing case. He does not withhold criticisms concerning the devices used by both the prosecution and the defense, thus making the book interesting and read-

able. Harwell never vents an opinion on the guilt or innocence of Little but does pass judgement on the state of small Southern towns. He is subtle in his mode of criticism; instead of directly commenting on the lack of intelligence of county law enforcement agencies, he employs devices such as deputy reports filled with poor grammar and misspellings. Nevertheless, Harwell's study is captivating and informative to those with even a slight interest in Joan Little.

Lisa Ferguson

---

**ELIZABETH PHILLIPS**  
**Edgar Allan Poe: An American Imagination — Three Essays**  
**142 pp. Kennikat Press**

---

In what way is Edgar Allan Poe's work like the unicorn? Both might be said to be a product of the arabesque-like quality of the human imagination, but the key to the question lies in recent scholarship from which such fantastical inspiration might spring. In dealing with these worthy subjects, one runs the risk of demystifying them. Elizabeth Phillips' *Edgar Allan Poe: An American Imagination* does, for the most part, avoid the kind of scholarship that threatens to trace the unicorn to the rhinoceros, the walrus, or the narwhal. She honors, as one might the legend of the unicorn, the melding process that combines inspirations grounded in reality into a final product whose elements are difficult to ascertain. It was Poe's own feeling, stated in his criticism, that the imagination is limited to that which it encounters in its experience of time, or space and of its condition.

The first of three essays, "The Air of Democracy and the Imagination of Man" illustrates some parallels between Poe's work and the writing of Alexis de Tocqueville, a French observer of American political culture. It appears that neither author was aware of the other's work, though both had



similar insights into the stuff of which American literature might be made. Yet, just as one might despair of the desire to unearth the cultural elements that man, beyond all reason, has mingled to make up the beautiful, mythical beast, it seems unnecessary to ground Poe thoroughly in the American experience, especially as it is presented by Tocqueville.

Phillips feels, as Tocqueville did, that the "Air of Democracy" was a limiting factor on the inspiration of a writer, and that the relative youth of American literature meant that it had not yet made sufficient inroads into its own capacities. There is a level of agreement between Poe and Tocqueville that the character of American literature would "be particularly its own," and that, for the lack of an aristocracy or mystical religion, the American writer would turn to a more universal, average man for his subject matter. This is certainly true of Poe, who turned to the study of human emotions in an interior dialogue rather than to man's confrontation with society. DeTocqueville found that day-to-day American life, because of its industriousness and the equality of condition, would not prove an adequate source of "poetry."

The Olympians seemed less credible subjects for poetry in the United States, where the distance between

hero and mankind was considerably shortened, making it difficult to idealize those "who are seen to have characteristics in common with everyone else." Phillips calls America a "world beyond tradition," yet "Poe, from whatever sources, provided a metaphor for the experience of a man in a strange world that must have spoken to the American readers' experience which did not always culminate in good fortune and optimism." This "good fortune and optimism" seems to stem from a Tocquevillian analysis of a commercial Republic. If Poe's work spoke to the American experience, it was because, despite the "equality of condition," Americans received a documentation on the inequality of mental condition, which is the variable that constitutes this "strange world."

The third essay, "Mere Household Events: The Metaphysics of Mania" follows logically upon the first, as it develops further the sources of mental anguish in Poe's own life. Romantic and financial troubles, alcoholism, and later in his life, insanity, syncretized his writings. Mental illness was a topic of scholarly medical writing in Poe's time. Even before his experience of it Poe accurately described its symptoms. Poe's study provided him with more probes for rigorous self analysis, which proved a bottomless source of

inspiration.

Entitled "The Imagination of a Great Landscape," the second essay most fully explains what Poe meant when he defined art as "the reproduction of what the Senses perceive in Nature through the veil of the soul." This veil allowed him to spiritualize the limitless spaces, place them on a star or people them with a fading race.

From this point Phillips demonstrates that an American landscape informs Poe's poetical space, even as he writes of the Roman Coliseum or of an imaginary place. In this kind of landscape the lonely romantic can lose his sense of self. Phillips writes that this loss has led some of Poe's readers to conclude that he repudiated earthly things, but she states convincingly that "the images of ideality itself are the images of earth."

Phillips shows us little cause to mourn the demystification of Poe's work, and though some of the sources that fed his imagination have been identified and narrowed, the process that combines them remains an enigma. The question of sources, American in Poe's case, does not explain the product of his work. Poe's writing remains a unicorn.

Lauren Doyle-McCombs

## Hobby

I've got an aquarium full  
of rare  
tropical  
semi-tropical  
delicately colored  
incandescent  
very expensive  
water-soluble  
fish.

by Evelyn Byrd Tribble





